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## LITERATURE

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FEBRUARY 11, 1911

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December 31st, 1910.

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## REVIEW OF THE WEEK

THE movement having for its object the promotion of cordial relations between this country and Germany is one which we look upon with the utmost goodwill. A meeting held on Monday last at the Queen's Hall, under the auspices of the Councils of the Churches in both Empires, was a distinct success, and, we hope, may be regarded as an indication of renewed interest in the matter. From its inception we have been connected with Lord Avebury's Anglo-German Entente Committee, and have regretted that of late its activities have seemed somewhat in abeyance. Both nations, as represented by individuals, find each other pleasantly in agreement when they meet and converse on ordinary affairs; there is no inherent antagonism between the German and English natures, and we can reciprocate the remark made by Dr. Spieker at the Queen's Hall to the effect that the German people desired most earnestly to live in peace with all their neighbours. The question of rivalry in navies and armaments, which recurs periodically in certain newspapers—eager for copy at all costs—and is too often fostered, we fear, by startling headlines and imprudent journalism, receives, perhaps, too much attention. As a nation we cannot resent Germany's energy in the building of battleships or her wish to possess a powerful fleet; in the present state of civilisation every country must take care of itself and be ready to defend itself. Conversely, Germany need not grumble if we endeavour to maintain our own fine position among the great Powers of the world by keeping

up the highest possible naval standard. A strong Navy is the best guarantee of peace, and its possession can be dissociated entirely from any idea of offence or ill-will towards other nations.

Sixty-two Members of the Irish party, at a meeting presided over by Mr. John Redmond, discussing the proposed Act providing for the payment of Members of Parliament, have arrived at some conclusions replete with a type of unconscious humour which we may term "Irish" in a double sense. They consider that "the Irish party are in this Parliament as a protest against the system of government forced upon them against their will," and that as they have never asked for the application of this measure to Ireland, but "have always been and are still content to depend upon the voluntary contributions of their own race," the Government should be requested to devote the money which would otherwise remunerate these truly Irish Members for their invaluable services to "some useful purpose in Ireland." Passing over this delightful testimony to their own inutility, we may note that the reference to "voluntary contributions of their own race" is particularly brazen—or naïve, as the case may be—in view of the recent haul from America. This self-sacrificing relinquishment of golden guineas, however, has a conditional clause; it is only "pending the grant of Home Rule to Ireland" that the Irish Members desire to offer their services free of cost. When they obtain Home Rule—which means the management of their own local affairs—they are to be paid, we presume, from the Imperial Treasury. It is exceedingly good of these sixty-two bland and benevolent Irishmen to lay before us their academic views; but, as they take very little interest in anything outside their own concerns, we may be permitted to remark that those views will hardly materialise. Is the "useful purpose in Ireland," to which these savings of proposed payment are to be devoted, the erection of a statue to the god of blarney?

Another small labour trouble flamed up last week and luckily flickered out, although for one day it threatened to become a serious conflagration. In one respect, which it possessed in common with the strike on the same railway—the North Eastern—which occurred last July, Saturday's brief rebellion merits attention as a sign of the times. The men acted on their own initiative, without the authority of the leaders of their Trade Unions—the very organisations which during the last few years, by their own demand and consent, have been built up ostensibly for the protection of their own interests. The question as to whether or not the cause of complaint was justifiable in this particular instance does not for the moment matter; what we wish to emphasise at present is that the workman, subtly imbued by means of specious oratory and plausible leaflets with Socialistic views, will in a sullen or intemperate mood ignore the so-called safeguards he has been persuaded to construct.

Meanwhile, the type of workman who does his best for his employer or employers, confident that in the long run this will be best for him; who thinks out matters for himself, and refuses to let his thinking be done for him by raucous-voiced street-corner politicians (if their strange processes of ratiocination can be dignified by the term "thinking"); who realises that a "successful" strike is the very antithesis to true success, since it is ruinous to all harmony and good feeling—this type of working man seems to be dying out. In his place we find too frequently the morose, dissatisfied product of ignorant agitators—a man inflated by windy

arguments, ready at a word from his "Union" to break into open rebellion, and to incite his fellows to do the same. Naturally such a man often loses his situation, sinks to the melancholy ranks of the unemployed, and becomes a hindrance to all social progress and a problem to philanthropists and economists. We are far from suggesting that such a man is a fair sample of the British workman of the present day; happily he is still outnumbered by hard-headed, sensible fellows; but the disease is at work in our midst, and until the present febrile methods of Socialistic legislation are replaced by procedures at once sane and strong, such men, in increasing quantities, will be the miserable result.

The National Council of Public Morals opened its conference at Edinburgh this week, and discussed, among other things, a question which seems to grow more pressing in this country as time goes on—the flood of injurious literature that continues to pour forth in spite of the spasmodic efforts made from time to time to stop it. We use the word "literature," of course, in its broadest interpretation. Any one who has noted the development of popular reading-matter during, say, the last twenty years, cannot have failed to observe the contrast which the present day offers to the preceding period; the windows of the shops which purvey such wares are evidence enough. Covers of thousands of cheap and nasty novels are designed obviously with a view to provoking erotic curiosity; the contents of such books, when not definitely pernicious, are often highly suggestive. For such publications the excuse of "art" is untenable; good art of any description, literary or otherwise, is the last thing to be found between their covers. We are far from wishing that writers should be haunted by the spectre of the "young person" when they conceive and elaborate their plots; but a serious, thoughtful analysis of the sombre side of life and a story written deliberately to excite harmful curiosity are two very different things. There is a lack of system and an incoherence in our manner of dealing with this problem which must be remedied before much good can be accomplished. Conferences, however useful, are intermittent; and writers are prolific, knowing that in this particular market a supply, luridly displayed, creates a demand.

According to advices from St. Petersburg, Tolstoi's posthumous works partly consist of his memoirs in the form of a diary, which he has kept from his twenty-fifth year up to a few days before his flight from Yasnaya Poljana. This diary is very extensive, and would fill about thirty printed volumes. There are also two volumes, of about six hundred pages each, of social studies, stories, and novels, partly unfinished. Some of the above-mentioned manuscripts have been stolen, but the thieves will not be able to make use of them, as the titles of the complete works are known; also, there exist one or two copies of each manuscript. The inventory of Tolstoi's works includes a comedy, "The Sage," and various sociological articles; also the following literary treasures:—"Hadjé Murad" (inspired by Tolstoi's sojourn in the Caucasus), "Peter Sergius" (the psychology of a priest), "After the Ball," "The Devil," "The Corpse," "The Jester," "The Diary of a Madman," "The Moon Shines Through the Clouds," "A Young Tsar," "Theodor Koumishe's Diary," "Who is Right?" "The History of a Beehive," "Alioka Govcheff," "What I saw in a Dream," "She Possesses All the Qualities" (study of a woman), "Tikhon and Melanie," "The Diary of a Mother," "They Are Not Criminals," "Who has Killed?" "The Wisdom of Children," "By Accident," "The History of a Doochebor," and "Modern Socialism."

## NOW GOES OUR LADY TO THE WOODS

Now goes our lady to the woods:  
Not that she needeth to take flight:  
Her soul hath its own solitudes—  
Its stars, on the most starless night,  
Its light, on the most sunless day.  
She takes not flight—she goes away  
As quiet, queenly, rare, as here,  
In Babylon, when days are drear,  
She moves about. She does not fly;  
She does not haste; she merely goes—  
To where the dreaming poplar rows  
Look upward to the Milky Way;  
Where men have bliss of stars by night,  
Behold the gorgeous sun by day,  
The coloured seasons drifting by:  
She takes not flight—but none the less  
Doth she rejoice again to catch  
The spaces to her soul, and match  
Her quiet soul with quietness.

F. N.

## "VIVAT CRIMEN"

On July 23rd last we published an editorial entitled "Sense or Sentiment." It dealt with Mr. Churchill's speech in the House of Commons outlining a pet scheme for tampering with sentences and converting prisons into abodes of "luxury and ease." A very valuable article in the *Sunday Times* of the 5th inst., although inaccurate in its reference to the action of the Kingston County Bench, enforces the same conclusions with remarkable vigour. Speaking with some experience, we do not endorse the writer's strictures on the Probation of First Offenders Act. We consider this Act one of the most valuable on the Statute Book. We think that the Act most admirably tempers justice with mercy and common sense. The writer of the article, who no doubt has no judicial experience, commits himself to the statement that the first offender who is bound over is "practically pardoned." Of course that statement is wholly misleading. Postponement of sentence *quam-diu se bene gesserit* exactly explains the operation of the Act.

Apart from the few inaccuracies to which we have referred, we entirely commend the substance and the spirit of the article. What is more, the Blue-book recently issued on Criminal Statistics reveals a remarkable increase in crime during recent years, including many acts of violent brutality, such as that within the last few days at Kingston-upon-Thames.

What is in reality the underlying cause of this criminal recrudescence? We think we can trace it to a disposition to rebel against law, order, and authority generally, which is permeating vast masses of the people. The tendency is observed in insubordination in the ranks of the Trades Unionists and in defiance of authority at Tonypany. Another cause, we think, of increase of crime is that in a large portion of the Press, at cinematograph shows, and at Madame Tussaud's, the



criminal is able to attract to himself a niche in popular estimation. If he is not interesting, why are his doings chronicled in dailies, and especially weeklies, to the exclusion of entertaining, useful, and cleanly news which it might be supposed a wholesome people would desire to be purveyed to them? If he is not interesting, why does a Chancellor of the Exchequer compose an effort in emulation of Gray's *Elegy* to the blue-eyed shepherd whose many lapses Mr. Churchill excuses on the ground that he was "only a pilferer"? We think the criminal is essentially a vain person, and, realising to the full that

Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear,

is anxious to emerge into the limelight, and become the darling of Chancellors and of Home Secretaries, and to share with them the attention of the cinematograph operator, and appear as a central character in a new novel by one of the authors who knows that a nice epice of crime will cover ignorance of grammar and innocence of the rules of composition.

Another reason why the criminal is increasing is that Mr. Churchill, when he is tired of spending public money on circulars instructing magistrates in their duties—circulars which meet with a uniform destination—is in the habit of revising—in the interest of the criminal—sentences which have been passed under circumstances of which he is blandly ignorant. It is a common occurrence for a prisoner when sentenced to remark insolently that Mr. Churchill will soon put matters right, and thus law is brought into contempt.

In a former article we ventured to criticise Mr. Churchill's speech outlining his ideas of prison reform. We remarked from knowledge that prisons were already viewed by many criminals as "Homes of Rest" and we added:—

In what estimation will they be held when bands of music, concerts, landscape gardens, the latest novels with criminal heroes, and other luxuries are supplied, and when the perfectly wholesome porridge and prison fare is exchanged for a menu by Oddenino's chef?

To those words, written many months ago, we adhere, and we repeat our protest against sickening sentimentality in high places. Our view is entirely supported by the "Lay of the Last Prisoner" on the walls of Reading gaol, in which he contrasts his comfortable lot with the misery many of the honest are enduring outside of the gaol precincts.

How strangely history repeats itself! Juvenal, about 80 A.D., wrote:—

Probitas laudatur—et alget,  
Criminibus debent hortos, prætoria, mensas  
Argentum vetus et stantem extra pocula caprum.

How faithfully are reproduced to-day the follies and the vices of Ancient Rome!

CECIL COWPER.

## "WHAT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE SYSTEM?"

### AN ANSWER

It is quite true to say that nobody wanted the recent General Election. But that feeling of personal disinclination to engage in it in no way diminishes the authority or value of

its results. On the contrary, it rather enhances them, and for this reason. The attention of the whole country was concentrated upon the cause that compelled it. It reminded electors, ordinarily accustomed to exercise the franchise under the guillotine-like operation of the Septennial Act, that there was some special reason for disturbing their ease at that particular time of the year, when one wants, if possible, to release the mind from strain and annoyance. But so urgent was the matter that not even the fear of upsetting the trade and festivities of Christmas could prevent or delay it. Mr. Balfour himself admitted that at most it could have been postponed but a few weeks. Clearly the Election then was not "a solemn farce."

Why was the General Election of January held, and what was it to determine? It was held for the sole purpose of satisfying the Sovereign that there was a majority, a substantial majority possibly, in favour of the Veto Bill of the Government. And if that became clear, then the question of the settlement of the differences between the two Houses of Parliament was determined, since the Government scheme, as opposed to the scheme outlined in the Lansdowne resolutions, would have won the day.

Surely, then, a result which secures an *ad hoc* majority of well over one hundred and twenty returned in support of the Government scheme cannot be called the *status quo ante*? A majority of over one hundred and twenty is a very big majority, and there resides in the Government controlling it great power and authority. If the representative system is to be respected and preserved at all, if the seat of Government is to remain in the House of Commons and be occupied by the party able to carry on the business of the nation, then such a party which can outnumber its opponents in the division lobby by one hundred and twenty is, in the mind of every constitutionalist at least, in a very strong position to do its work.

If the composition of that majority is to be considered and weighed, still the Government position is infinitely better than that of its opponents. If Ireland is to be left out of account—though I do not know why it should be—then the Unionist Members returned for Irish constituencies must naturally also be deducted. This would leave the Liberal party, as regards England, Wales, and Scotland, in a majority over the Unionists of more than seventy. And even if the Labour Members are to be deducted—though on this question of the Veto Bill to do so would be absurd—still the Government's majority would be over thirty. But to make those subtractions in order to diminish the authority of the Government's majority is about as sensible as it would have been for the Liberals in 1895 to deduct the Liberal-Unionists from Lord Salisbury's majority and to claim that as Liberal-Unionists were not Conservatives they should be deducted, leaving the Conservative party with so slender a majority that it had no right to continue in office! There was at that time quite as much divergence between the two groups making up the coalition which maintained Lord Salisbury in power as there is between the differing sections of Mr. Asquith's majority. The coalition of the 1895 Parliament was united upon one thing only—opposition to Home Rule.

The coalition of the 1911 Parliament is united, if you will, upon one issue only—opposition to the House of Lords as it is at present constituted, and support to the Veto Bill proposed to alter that constitution. It was found in practice that that Conservative-cum-Liberal-Unionist coalition was a very solid and reliable thing, and it maintained the Conservative party in office during two Parliaments and over ten years. There is no reason for the Government to fear a less fortunate result for this present coalition.

Further, there is no ground for saying that the country is being ruled "not by a majority of its own choice." Mr. Balfour introduced the Referendum upon the Tariff Reform question to enable the Conservative Press to state, as the *Daily Mail* did on its placards, "Tariff Reform not to be decided by this Election." All are, I think, agreed that the House of Lords question was kept clearly in the forefront, and that, as far as any Election ever could be said to be fought upon one issue alone, this one was. In other words, something very like a perfect Referendum or poll of the people actually took place. Therefore every vote cast for a coalition candidate was a vote, given with eye-openness and intent, to secure by the only recognised constitutional means—viz., through the chosen representatives of the people—the settlement of this long-overdue problem along the lines clearly laid down in the Parliament Bill of the Government.

"If the House of Commons is to be the sport of noxious minorities . . . can it be contended in good faith and with mental balance that a loyal and patriotic Second Chamber removed from the contamination of impure motives should be swept away or synonymously reduced to a nullity?" The last thing the Liberal party would seek to do would be to sweep away "a loyal and patriotic Second Chamber removed from impure motives." But after the admissions of Lord Rosebery and Lord Lansdowne and the other leaders of the Opposition to the Government's plan, it is rather late in the day to pay the House of Lords such a thorough-going and handsome compliment. It is for the very purpose of securing a Second Chamber much more loyal to the constitution that gives us our freedom and our representative institutions, much more patriotic and less purely party, and very much farther removed from the contamination of impure motives, such as guided it in passing the Licensing Act of 1904 and throwing out the Licensing Bill of 1908, that the Government have taken the matter so firmly in hand.

For the Government to hesitate in carrying through the Bill, for which they have been specifically provided with a majority, would be the basest and blackest betrayal of loyal and enduring followers in all our political history. There is no reason to suppose they will. On the contrary, it is certain that they will not, and that considerably before the Coronation time arrives the whole matter will be through. To incite the House of Lords to reject the Bill is to incite them to break the law, to reject the clearest views of every constitutional authority.

And suppose they did reject it? The necessary peers would most certainly be created, and for the first time since our Parliamentary institutions became settled upon a representative basis you would have a Liberal majority in both Houses. Then would the representative system receive its fullest expression, and, ceasing to be a sham, become the real

living thing it ought to be. For the very sake of our representative system itself I say—

The Parliament Bill must become law.

A. WENYON-SAMUEL.

[We have much pleasure in printing the above reasoned reply to our editorial of last week. We shall welcome views from others of our readers.—ED.]

## THE SCHELDT—I.

By H. BELLOC.

SOME few weeks ago it was known that the Dutch Government had proposed to establish large modern and permanent fortifications upon either side of the mouth of the Scheldt.

The Government of the French Republic at once appreciated the importance of this departure; somewhat tardily, the Press of this country also interested itself in the matter. Were the policy to mature, and were the mouth of the Scheldt to be fortified, this country, as I shall show, would necessarily be the chief sufferer; it is worthy of attention, therefore, that the meaning of such a policy, and the very fact that it was contemplated at all, was missed for some weeks by our authorities, and when it was tardily recognised was recognised through the influence of the Press, and that Press informed or aroused from French sources.

The matter will be less talked of in the immediate future, for the French protest will certainly be successful; but after the lapse of some little time the question of the Scheldt is bound, in one way or another, to re-arise. It behoves us, therefore, to get some clear idea as to what the fortification of the mouth of the river means in the military situation of Europe, under what counsels it can have been suggested, and what its ultimate effect would be.

I propose this week to consider these points in their most general aspect, and next week to go with some detail into the conditions under which such fortifications would be established, the vulnerability of Antwerp, its communications with the East and with the South-West, &c. In other words, I propose this week to deal with the generalities of the problem, and next week with its particulars.

The first general question we must ask ourselves is whether Belgium and the Netherlands would be neutral territory in case of a war in Western Europe, as they were maintained neutral territory during the last great war of the kind, forty years ago.

The answer to this question is admittedly in the negative. A policy ultimately unwise (for it corresponds morally to running into debt) is admitted upon the part of Prussia and of the German Empire which is now Prussian in administration. This policy sets out to disregard the terms of treaties after an act of war. By that simple expedient immediate advantages can always be gained. The progressive disadvantage attaching to it is an inability to form secure alliances, to guarantee internal stability, or to pursue any fixed foreign policy. The curious will note that the inauguration of this policy in the partition of Poland has in little more than a century saddled the Prussian Service with a larger proportion of unreliable troops than are to be discovered in any other Service in the world.

For the strict purpose of military inquiry, however, the wisdom or folly of such morals does not concern us. It is a



fact that the neutral territory of a weak State would be violated in case of a war in Western Europe to-day. One Power has virtually declared its intention so to act; its potential enemies are bound to follow suit. We conclude, therefore, of Belgian territory as of some parts of Swiss territory, as of Danish and as of Dutch, that after the first act of war the pledged word of guaranteeing Powers will carry no further sanctity. It is to be remarked that this conclusion is of wide effect: it does not only mean that troops may, after the first act of war, be discovered in Belgian territory approaching from the eastward, but that they may also be discovered approaching from the southward and westward, or from the sea. It does not only mean that Luxembourg, the railways of which are in German hands, may be traversed from Treves; it also means that those railways may be cut by cavalry from Longwy. It does not only mean that Brussels is eighty miles from Aix; it also means that Brussels is a little more than sixty miles from Lille; and the communications from the north-east of France into the "neutral" territory are far simpler and easier than those from Germany.

Granted, then, that Belgium must be treated as part of the seat of war, of what strategical value is the Scheldt, and the town of Antwerp situated upon it, to the various parties that may be engaged?

Apart from communication by sea, the great river and its port are of no positive strategical value. To purely Continental combatants upon Belgian soil Antwerp is nothing, save that, even in the present unfinished condition of its new fortification, the city affords a stronghold into which the Belgian or any other army could retire. But if Antwerp be of this character, to close the mouth of the Scheldt is only of advantage to Antwerp's opponent. In other words, there would be no point in any one's closing the Scheldt in a military fashion unless he were considering *hostile* reinforcements from the sea.

To hold the keys of the Scheldt *after* a successful war would indeed be a permanent commercial and strategical advantage to the conqueror who should also have occupied and be administering Antwerp, but to forge such a lock and such keys *before* a campaign without knowing to which of two land forces they might fall, one's own or one's enemies, would be folly. It becomes wisdom only when a maritime partner in the struggle is considered.

France and Germany combined against England would wish to see the mouth of the Scheldt fortified; either of them acting alone against England would wish to see the mouth of the Scheldt fortified; but in no conceivable case, save the improbable one following upon an annexation of Dutch territory by England, could England wish to see it fortified.

The port of Antwerp is for many reasons, which cannot be here detailed, among the first in the world. For the same reasons it may become in the near future the first in Europe. The knowledge of this confuses men when they consider the military problem. To possess such a port through a long period of commercial development, to be able to use it as a base in time of war, would be of the utmost value to whomever might be its Sovereign; but all that has nothing to do with its strategical value in the course of a campaign originating outside Belgian territory, and that strategical value is, as I have said, purely negative from the point of view of an invader. Were a French Army suc-

cessfully attacking a German upon the neutral territory of Belgium in violation of treaties, or a German Army successfully attacking a French, either could afford to neglect Antwerp altogether, *save for the sea*. The moment a maritime belligerent enters as a party to the contest the cutting off of Antwerp from the sea becomes all-important to whichever of the two combatants is the enemy of the maritime Power. Not the holding of Antwerp, nor the using of Antwerp as a base, but *the cutting off of Antwerp from the sea*.

The mouth of the Scheldt once closed, in a military sense, by the lock of fortification, to grasp the keys of that lock would be the very first act of whatever Power violating the neutrality of the Low Countries had England for an opponent.

The Scheldt is not a barrier as is the Meuse to French armies marching eastward, or to German armies marching westward. It is a mouth—a source of supply from the sea. Antwerp is indeed a great place of war; but its life, should an army be thrown behind its fortifications, would still depend upon the sea; indeed, the whole scheme of the fortification of Antwerp depends upon an open river.

We may sum up then and say that, quite apart from the present real or supposed international situation, the only conceivable meaning of the fortification of the mouth of the Scheldt is that it is directed against the military action of whatever maritime Power could, by its purely maritime preponderance, affect an European war in the Low Countries. There is but one such Power, and that Power is England. The proposal to fortify the mouth of the Scheldt, though it is France that will defeat it for the moment, was aimed at England, and it was aimed at England not in her capacity as the momentary half-ally of France, but in her capacity of the permanent modern rival of Germany.

That Germany does not intend war, that Germany cannot proceed to war without an understanding with France, though the first statement is probably, and the second certainly, true, should in no way affect our judgment of this matter. The fortification of the mouth of the Scheldt is undertaken, as every military act in time of peace must be undertaken, in view of a contingency only. It presupposes one possible enemy and one alone, and that enemy is England. It would equally presuppose such an enemy were its ultimate authors French, German, or X. No other conceivable military meaning attaches to the step, unless we are to regard Holland as a great Power which is threatening another great Power, Belgium, and finds in the threat to close the great river of Antwerp a powerful weapon against its dreaded opponent.

Well and good. The reader may grant that the proof in generalities is conclusive; but what of the proof in particulars? Could not the Scheldt be as effectively closed by mines? To what perils is Antwerp exposed? Is the magnitude of the interests involved sufficient to make the shutting off of Antwerp worth an enemy's while? Does not the line of the Meuse sufficiently protect Belgian territory from the east? And so forth. The reader will demand an answer to these particular points, without the right apprehension of which the general policy of fortifying the mouth of the Scheldt might very well, though politically plausible, be militarily ridiculous. I shall attempt to answer such questions in my next article.

## REVIEWS

## THE PEN AND THE SWORD

*The Life of Sir William Howard Russell, C.V.O., LL.D., the First Special Correspondent.* By JOHN BLACK ATKINS. With Portraits and Illustrations. Two Vols. (John Murray. 30s. net.)

THE attentive reader of a poorly-conceived biography is often drawn to and fro in a harassing manner between two themes: what a man is, and what he has done. Psychologically considered, the two things are inseparable; at various crises in his career a man acts, not so much on impulse (as it may well seem to the unwitting outsider), but rather according to the cumulative effect of preceding years combined with the character he has developed up to that point; character and experience, in fact, are the two forces, growing stronger as we grow older, which determine our behaviour in matters great or small, and which shape our destiny. To show these forces in lively operation, unobtrusively and incidentally, while relating the story of his chosen hero's life, may be regarded as a triumph of the biographer's art, and in this skilfully-woven, detailed record of the man whom Wolseley called "the link between Literature and the Army," Mr. Atkins, himself well versed in war and war-like affairs, has come very near to the ideal. He brings before us the personality of William Howard Russell so vividly that we seem to know the man himself, to realise intimately his nature, to feel ourselves breathlessly with him in emergencies, to understand the stress of his mind when real or imaginary slights came in his way. Few writers can accomplish so much without being occasionally dull; but it is perfectly true to say that there is not a dreary or tiresome page in the whole of these two bulky volumes.

Russell's first glimpse into literature was through the magic glass of "Pickwick," bought casually in Dublin. "In five minutes," he wrote, "a new world was open to me; I have been living in it ever since." At the age of twenty his friends hinted that he must be up and stirring, "though no suggestion was made as to what he should be up to or what he should stir;" but the starting-point of his active life was close at hand. His cousin, Robert Russell, on the staff of the *Times*, needed the assistance of competent men to report election affairs in Ireland, and young Russell then began that career of setting things seen into a frame of words which lasted almost continuously for half a century. Up and down the land he went, witnessing all the excitement of Irish elections that were "saturated and highly flavoured with whisky," narrowly escaping duckings and maltreatment, and doubtless hugely enjoying himself. Then came a visit to London to see the elder Delane, who, strange to say, did not at once secure him. Russell actually accepted the post of junior mathematical master at Kensington Grammar-school, but very soon began a spell of free-lancing, at the mercy of London editors. Mr. Atkins does not say whether any of his immature stories and articles are preserved, but they would make interesting reading in the light of after-events.

One more, however, the *Times* came to his rescue, and Russell took his place on the staff as a reporter in the Press Gallery of the House of Commons. At the bidding of his chief—J. T. Delane—he went to Ireland and described the Repeal Agitation, following this by reporting the trial of O'Connell. From Dublin to London with the verdict was

probably his first serious emergency-run: it proved also a preliminary to his first severe lesson, for after his journey by special boat and train he was trapped by an apparently casual remark made to him by some men in shirt-sleeves at the very door of the *Times* offices. He replied indiscreetly, only to repent heartily the next morning, when he discovered that they were emissaries of the *Morning Herald*, and had thus secured the news which he had so laboriously brought! "We would have given hundreds of pounds," said Delane, "to have stopped your few words last night."

The story of Russell centres, of course, in the Crimean War, and more fascinating than any romance is the portion of this biography which deals with those exciting and terrible times. At the age of thirty-four, having won his spurs by his steadily excellent work, he was requested to proceed to Malta with the Guards; while there, the news came that an advance of the combined expeditionary armies of France and England was to be made, and, little dreaming what was in store, Russell followed them. For a considerable time nothing really happened in the way of conflict, and the need to write frequent letters to his paper, says Mr. Atkins, was a test of his abilities as a correspondent:—

Many journalists in such circumstances would have felt that they were out for a war or nothing; that so long as war did not begin there was "nothing to write about." Russell perceived that not only was everything interesting, but everything was relevant. Nothing was too small for him to notice; the incidents of the streets, the conversations of the soldiers, the appearance of the amazingly mixed population, the scenery, the agriculture, the *flora* and *fauna*. All these things were made the background of a running narrative of extraordinary ease and vivacity. This result was not produced, of course, by mere industry in retailing what he saw; he had a scholarly mind and humour; the one saved him from treating small matters without dignity, and the other made his choice of material perfectly appropriate and well proportioned. . . .

He "reported" the war, yet in a very genuine sense he was a critic of astonishing acumen and efficiency. In encompassing this combination of values his letters were a new thing in journalism. They were a model of what such letters should be. Every reader of them in the *Times* felt that he had the movements, the sufferings, the aspirations of the Army—nay, the very ground on which the troops were camped—presented before his eyes.

In this luminous passage, which illustrates the author's admirably clear and forceful style, is summed up the appeal which Russell's letters made to his readers. His character comes out in them. He is angry at the sorrows and sufferings of others—anxious to relieve them; he sees the glaring faults in the administration of the troops, and fears no condemnation for his direct and outspoken words. "The management is infamous," he wrote to Delane from Gallipoli, where he had landed with the Light Division; but he was to behold many things far worse than mere mismanagement. His landing at the scene of operations was inauspicious. Unable to find his friends, unable to return to the ship, he "crept under a cart and spent the night listening to the splash of the rain, the thunder of the surf, and the striking of the ship's bells." Before dawn he woke from a troubled doze to see the red glow from burning houses in the direction of Sebastopol.

It is curious to note the high-handed way in which war correspondents were treated in those days. Russell, backed by the first newspaper in London, was ordered here and there, found himself generally in the way, regarded as an interloper who had no business to be at the seat of war at all. Sir De Lacy Evans told him to "get attached to some-



thing or other," but when he began following Lord Raglan's cavalcade an A.D.C. came up and worried him off:—

"You mustn't stay here, I tell you. There are orders for everyone to get out of this." Russell entreated in vain. "I'll send Sir John [Burgoyne] to you, I will, if you don't go." "I never," says Russell, "was in a more unpleasant position. Everyone else on the field had some *raison d'être*. I had none. They were on recognised business. It could scarcely be a recognised or legitimate business for any man to ride in front of the Army in order that he might be able to write an account of a battle for a newspaper. I was a very fly in amber."

But the art of war correspondence was then in its infancy; present-day speed was unknown. Russell writes from Balaklava, for example, that he is certain "a telegraph might be dispatched from the Crimea and received in London in a hundred hours at farthest."

Very much of the interest of this record is embodied in the various letters which Mr. Atkins freely reproduces, and which, in many instances, are printed for the first time. In one from Alexander Soyer, the famous French *chef*, who was superintending the food system of the expedition, we have an especially pleasant reminiscence of Miss Florence Nightingale, who so recently passed away:—

Miss Nightingale, who intended to visit with me the Camp Hospital on Monday, was, I am sorry to say, detained on board from sudden indisposition, being attacked with the premonitory symptoms of Crimean fever. Mr. Taylor was in attendance upon her, and called in medical assistance—Drs. Anderson and Sutherland ordering her immediate removal to the Castle Camp Hospital, where she remains. She was conveyed upon a stretcher by eight men. Mr. Bracebridge and I being out of the way, Taylor accompanied, holding an umbrella over her to keep the sun off her face, and to-day we hear she is a little better.

On the part which Russell played in awakening the people at home to the real state of affairs we need not enlarge; it is a matter of history. His plain-speaking letters roused the land, and, naturally, made for him plenty of enemies; on September 27th, 1856, the Secretary for War wrote to Gladstone trusting that the Army would "lynch the *Times* correspondent when they read his letter of yesterday." But Russell lived to be hailed as the saviour of the British Army, and most of his enemies came to admire him. In chapter xix. Mr. Atkins discusses whether Russell was unjust to Lord Raglan in his strictures, and concludes that he was not. "Russell could never have written with malice, because he had not not a grain of malice in his nature. He was animated in the Crimea by the simplest emotions—a vast pity and a generous indignation." At the same time the author is impartial, and admits that there were times when Russell drew wrong conclusions from what he saw—"He was human—very human—and he was an Irishman." To remember the conditions under which an enormous amount of his writing was done is to pardon him for any slips. After many wearying hours spent on the field, he had to set down his impressions when the troops were sleeping; his thoughts must often have formed a very scattered fleet. By day, by night, under every conceivable hindrance, he had to write, and the wonder of it is that his letters were so readable and lucid. We have his essential character in three lines later on:—"So long as he satisfied his scruples by publishing what seemed to him to be the truth, he was splendidly indifferent to the personal discomfort which might follow."

The lecturing tour which he entered upon after his return to England was not much to his taste, although he was then brought into contact with many eminent men—Palmerston, Thackeray, Dickens, Jerrold, Ainsworth, and others. On the last day of the year 1857 Russell was in the Mediter-

ranean on his way to investigate for the *Times* the state of affairs in India. During this campaign the treatment meted out to him by those in authority was of a very different quality from the slighting methods of Raglan. "Now, Mr. Russell," said Sir Colin Campbell, after greeting him frankly and cordially. "I'll be candid with you. We shall make a compact. You shall know everything that is going on; you shall know all my reports and get every information that I have myself, on the condition that you do not mention it in camp or let it be known in any way, except in your letters to England." Russell accepted the conditions, and Colin Campbell would visit his tent "at all times of the day or night with papers and explain the position of affairs." It was a fine tribute to the honour and esteem in which Russell was held.

The Mutiny and its accessory episodes came near to being the death of Russell. A thrilling description of his escape from the enemy, while yet ill and suffering from the kick of a restive stallion, is given in his own words; his constitution must have been marvellously strong to recover after such a fearful strain. Coming home once more, he was set to the task of leader-writing by the indefatigable Delane, and found the confinement an irksome contrast to the freedom of his previous life. To a great extent the story of Russell is the story of Delane. The character of that potentate of journalism is exhibited finely in the many letters which are quoted. The friendship between the two men was as firm as a friendship could be; but Delane never hesitated to give his friend a "wiggling" when he considered it necessary; remarkably neat and pungent wiggings some of them are, too:—

"I don't think," he wrote, upon receiving a particular review from Russell, "you have given yourself anything like time to write this last article. It is full of small points of detail, but contains no such general summing-up of the book as the public will naturally expect. Pray look it all over again, and let me have a separate 'But to conclude.'"

Delane had no notion that it was right for a reviewer to be clever rather than to be informing and clear. He could not tolerate that a writer should gratify his ambitions at the expense of his reader; to produce the most brilliant criticism which left the reader in some doubt as to the contents of the book was, to his mind, simply perverse; the review must state clearly the matter and manner of the book. The reader should be enabled to say, "Now I know what that book contains and how it is written," rather than "Whoever wrote that review is an uncommonly clever fellow."

In 1861, in spite of the fact that Russell was editor of the *Army and Navy Gazette*, which he had founded in conjunction with Messrs. Bradbury and Evans, he again resumed the profession so dear to his heart, as special correspondent of the *Times* to the American Civil War. Here he proved that his deductions were not invariably accurate, writing in his diary to the effect that he was "more satisfied than ever that the Union can never be restored as it was." More than once he became embroiled in serious troubles, sometimes through his unfailing integrity and his refusal to colour an event in the slightest, at other times from his desire to reassure a friend—as when his innocent telegram to Sam Ward was misconstrued into an advice to speculate on the Stock Exchange. It was a rash and thoughtless telegram, sent on the joyous impulse of the moment, and it came near to ruining his reputation. His report of the battle of Bull Run was fearless, as usual, and when the English papers arrived the Northern journals simply raved at him, execrated him, and made it distinctly questionable whether he was wise in remaining at his post. He became known as "Bull-Run Russell," was shot at, jeered at, abused, and

advised to "clear out." The *New York Times* stood by him, but, as Mr. Atkins remarks, this was only a "whisper in the storm."

During a comparatively restful period in this restless career, Russell reported the laying of the Atlantic cable on board the *Great Eastern*, being the only journalist present; he became also an intimate friend of the second Duke of Wellington, and met Disraeli. His diary is quoted on one occasion when he was staying at Strathfield Saye with the Duke:—

Dizzy in great force after dinner. Talked of Tycho Brahe, Copernicus, Euler, Kepler, Galileo, and Ptolemaic systems to our wonder, till Calcraft suggested he was lecturing, and John Hay shrewdly hit on the fact that he was only repeating a part of the speech that he was to have made if he had been elected Rector of the University of Edinburgh! He does not shoot, and does nothing at all but spy into books.

Delane was at him again in 1866, demanding imperiously an answer to his request that Russell should proceed to the seat of hostilities, as "Special" with one of the armies, in the Austro-Prussian upheaval. The answer was given, and he started from London on June 20th. Here we must note with pleasure the way in which Mr. Atkins contributes a brief summary of the situation and of the reasons for each campaign, for the benefit of his readers. Not every one has the necessary points of history at his fingers' ends, and the page or two of explanation before the story is resumed refreshes the memory to just the requisite extent. Russell was soon back, but after an attempt to enter Parliament (in which he opposed Sir Charles Dilke—then Mr. C. Dilke—for Chelsea) he was once more a special correspondent of the *Times*, in 1870, to the Franco-German War. In this conflict he realised for the first time that war correspondence was a very different matter from the letter-writing of the Crimean days. Reuter's telegraph agency had come into existence; the forces of electricity were being harnessed more and more; news was flashed home in an hour or two, even including delays, which in the olden times would have taken several days of travel by land and sea. Competition was keen; correspondents of other papers were on the spot. Archibald Forbes was distinguishing himself for the *Daily News*, and was eclipsing Russell in a way that made the staff of the *Times* gnash their teeth. How Russell ultimately scored and received the congratulations of his paper we must not tell here; suffice it to say that the whole record of his experiences during this world-famous war—his interviews with Bismarck, his residence in besieged Paris—makes the most enthralling reading.

Russell went with the then Prince of Wales to India, as every one knows, reporting the progress of the tour for the *Times*, but an amusing instance of his rather careless ways is given with regard to the publication of his narrative of that journey. His publishers wrote to him: "Your elaborate corrections have far exceeded all our previous experience or conception. The printer's account has just come in—Cost of original composition of the whole volume, £94 2s. 4d.; cost of corrections and cancelled matter, £473 17s.!"

His last campaign was the Zulu War which began in 1879, and this was undertaken for the *Daily Telegraph*. He found again no lack of adventures. The wound he had received in India twenty-one years before bothered him, and he suffered an accident while crossing a swollen stream which lamed him for the rest of his days. After this record his life becomes more peaceful, as was only meet; he rests on his laurels, edits the *Army and Navy Gazette*, and culti-

vates the amenities of city life. His knighthood, on Lord Rosebery's recommendation, came in 1895, and to the end, which occurred in 1907, he enjoyed the firm and thoughtful friendship of King Edward and Queen Alexandra.

So, strangely enough, this first of Special Correspondents, as he may be justly termed, linked in his own career the old methods and the new, bridged the gap between the time when the actual written letter had to reach the office of the paper and the time when the telegraph flashes the latest news to half the world at once. Finely, indeed, is his individuality brought before us in these pages; we realise that he made his life a success, not through a dominating intellect or an equipment of exceptional scholarship, but by his irresistible personality, his eager desire to be a friend to all who would permit him, his scorn of subterfuge, his utter freedom from the small and petty vices of spite and jealousy. He was "Billy" Russell to his intimates, "My dear old friend," "My dearest of friends," "You very dear old fellow" to many others, and to Delane, whose letters throughout this book are a delight, he was always very much more than a member of the staff. He was a great man in the best sense—that of great-heartedness—and his career has been recorded by one who understands and is in true sympathy with him.

We cannot fairly leave this biography without alluding to the excellent little essay which Mr. Atkins has added, dealing with "The Work and Future of War Correspondents." It is written with great good sense from the point of view of one who has experienced the difficulties and dangers of the profession, and we may quote one paragraph which puts the correspondent's duties clearly:—

The self-respecting correspondent has an enormously important task; he must be able when he surveys the tangle of contradictory tendencies to pick out, with the help of his experience and his instinct, what is essential. If he picks out what is unessential his narrative will be misleading and probably tedious. His office does not end with merely supplying the news, for that word postulates in itself that he should have the capacity of discriminating between what is true and what is false, what is likely to happen and what unlikely. The power of selection must be cultivated in the correspondent even more than in the artist. He is more than a translator; he is an interpreter.

Mr. Atkins inclines to the opinion that if it was decreed that the telegraph should no longer exist for correspondents "all would still have an equal opportunity to emulate the achievement of Russell; the newspapers would be saved much expense; the serious study of war would be advanced; the standard of writing would possibly become higher; and only the public would be deprived, for the sake of their country, of the means to satisfy their craving for promptly delivered sensations." We agree heartily in deprecating the present eager appetite for lurid reports and theatrical effects, the blatant headline and the screaming print; but the question is, would the public stand it? Our papers, or rather the worst of them, thrive on sensations, and the public have become clamorous for such fare. In any case, however, would not the news soon diffuse itself, since those in authority and their subordinates would receive it immediately from the general commanding at the scene of action? To abolish the war correspondent altogether is, as Mr. Atkins recognises, impossible, but he concludes, sensibly and wisely, that "the task for the future is to remove all the causes of error," so that in the hands of a man like Russell such correspondence "may yield a public service comparable with that of the soldier himself. And this task does not seem to be beyond the reach of ingenuity."

W. L. RANDELL.



## "FEMINA FECIT"

*The Emancipation of Englishwomen.* By W. LYON BLAISE.  
(Constable. 6s. net.)

THERE are a few passages in this serious and lengthy plea for giving women absolute political equality with men which are worthy of some attention. Firstly, speaking of the early eighteenth century, the writer says:—

In a society where there was neither railway, nor telegraph, nor telephone, and where a journey from Manchester to London was a more formidable task than a journey from Manchester to Vladivostok at the present day, new ideas of any kind spread with the utmost difficulty.

Again, treating the period of the first Reform Act, the writer instructs us that—

When the people declared . . . that a Peer had no more right to nominate a member of the House of Commons than a commoner, they meant that . . . a Peer was no better than one of themselves.

Then we learn that Byron drove away the cloud of false ideals, and left a clearer vision of things as they were, "and also cleared the ground of its accumulations of eighteenth-century rubbish." Finally, after Byron, "delicacy" was not only dead, but damned."

So it is not surprising to be informed that the phrase in the first report of the Ladies' College at Cheltenham pledging that institution to preserve the "modesty and gentleness of the female character" smacks of the "old school." The new school, it would appear, wishes to create a race of women which is immodest and ungente, and there is every reason, from the evidence of the last few years, to anticipate complete success for this brave enterprise.

As to the passages cited, it is odd to find that there are still human beings who believe that there is any relation between thought, new or old, and the telephone, telegraph, and railway to Manchester. The thinking of the world is a thing quite of another sphere from these unimportant mechanical inventions. It might perhaps be argued plausibly enough, that since men and messages have been diffused, thinking has become both foolish and diffuse; but that question may be left to another time. Then it may be mentioned that peers, *qua* peers, never possessed the sole right of nominating members of the House of Commons. The privilege of the pocket-borough was open to any man with money. Secondly, the view that the eighteenth century was absurdly "delicate" about women is interesting but entirely ridiculous. The author of "The Emancipation of Englishwomen" should read the "Memoirs of Casanova," on the one hand, and Boswell's "Johnson" on the other. Casanova was a cosmopolitan ruffian and profligate; Johnson a typical John Bull armed with a Prayer-book and a Latin grammar—in neither case is there the slightest approach to the sham sentimental delicacy to which our author alludes. There were drivellers in the eighteenth century as there are drivellers in the twentieth. The former, who talked about "the blushing fair," were silly and vacuous; the latter who babble over the details of Indian Bazaar life are silly, objectionable, and obnoxious to the wellbeing of the State. The notion that Byron, whose whole life was a piece of elaborate play-acting and pretence, whose sentiment is humbug, whose debauchery is vulgar though entertaining, cleared the world's mind of cant is quite exquisitely absurd. There have been men who have written of animal passion with such virile and plain directness that their work is in fact a purgative and wholesome medicine of the soul; the grossest tales of Chaucer are healthy and excellent, and

there are pages upon pages of the "Gargantua" and "Pantagruel" that cleanse the spirit. They are strong-smelling stuff, assuredly, but carbolic acid does not exhale the soft odours of the attar of roses. And such writers as these are at the opposite pole to Byron, who infected all Europe with the cant of indelicacy, an even more odious mental disease than the cant of delicacy. One had thought that even schoolgirls had ceased to search the pages of "Don Juan" for delightful impropriety; but it seems that this tradition of the daring and outspoken Byron dies hard.

These matters, however, are not of the highest importance. They show that the author of the book is ignorant of history, letters, and life; still, *ex ore infantum*; and an unwise person may utter the truth. The writer says that women are rational beings, and that, since all rational beings are entitled to a vote, women should be given the suffrage. Is this a true and valid argument?

Unquestionably it would seem, if you admit the major—that every rational (that is, human) being is entitled to a share in the making of the laws of his country. This premise is the premise of all Liberalism; and no man has a logical right to call himself a Liberal and vote against "Votes for Women." The Liberal who has a grain of sense left in his head does vote against female suffrage; but this is a case of instinct overruling the rational faculty. In the same way the American colonists solemnly declared that all men are born free and equal. They did not except negroes in theory, but they did in practice. Hence Johnson was able to ask, "How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty amongst the drivers of negroes?" Later in the history of the American Colonies a situation arose which made the enfranchisement of the negro a convenient stroke on the part of the Northern States; so Lincoln, with perfect consistency as an American citizen, with amazing folly as a human being, declared that every black man was a voter. Now let it be noted clearly that a negro is as much a human being as Plato, or Confucius, or St. Paul, or Alexander the Great, or St. Theresa; he may say truly and freely "Homo sum." So, by Lincoln's decree and under the protection of the armies of the North, he voted for four or five years, and controlled several States in the South. He brought these States to the verge of ruin and bankruptcy; the armies of the North went North—and the revolvers of the South did the rest. Liberal logic had worked itself out to its legitimate conclusion. This conclusion was perceived to be intolerable; and though Southern farmers may still say with their lips that all men are born free and equal, they take care to except in practice those men who have black faces.

It is probable that if women get the vote much the same results will follow—that the mass of female voters will fall under the influence of a set of scheming and ingenious male rascals, just as the poor blacks were made the tools of the Northern carpet-baggers, and that the false premise, here as in America, will work itself out through every kind of fantastic extravagance to its legitimate end of ruin and disaster.

The whole question of Women's Suffrage is so often debated on arguments that are no arguments that it seems permissible for once in a way to treat it on the ground of final principles. One is told that Miss This was a Senior Wrangler, that Mrs. That is a skilled surgeon, that many a man is a sot, that many a man is a criminal, that many a man is an evident fool. So one might propose the abolition of the sheep-dog because some collies are useless and others vicious, while sheep have never been known to bite. Then there are the "arguments" on the other side—that women should not have the vote because they are delicate creatures and can't fight, because if you want a good cook you get a

male *chef*, because drapers' shops are kept by men, because ladies prefer dresses made by a man tailor. The "reasons" on the one side are as imbecile as those on the other, and some of them have no foundation in fact. On the bad side and the good women have fought as well as men—Joan of Arc and the Maid of Saragossa, the *pétroleuses* of the Commune and the raging female Nihilists are examples that women can wield weapons. And ability in the kitchen or in the tailor's workroom is in reality no evidence of political capacity.

As has been said on the Liberal premise, the premise of democracy—one rational human being, one vote—the demand of the enraged female is irresistible. Practice, however, has shown that the Liberal premise is false. Every real democracy has come, and will come, to ruin and destruction. In ancient history great and glorious Athens gabbled itself into defeat and disaster; in modern history the United States, professedly democratic, has become corrupted into the most shameless plutocracy that the world has ever seen. Beginning with that famous "free and equal" declaration, it has worked out the syllogism so exquisitely that "politician" in America has every connotation of shame and scoundrelism and nameless wickedness. We may justly argue, therefore, that the Liberal supposition is shown to be false by a kind of catholic *reductio ad nefandum et absurdum*. And, therefore, the premise failing, the conclusion fails also; women should not have the vote simply because they are rational human beings. But it may be said that since, rightly or wrongly, the democratic theory is in possession, we should carry it out logically. Since John Styles the gardener can make a cross and help to determine the destinies of his country, should not Lady Clara Vere de Vere, John's mistress, have the same privilege? No; unless having a pretty bad indigestion you proceed to eat a few tenpenny nails; or, being very drunk, order a fresh bottle of brandy—on logical principles. Our state is bad; there is no reason why we should make it worse by adding to a voting-list chiefly composed of emotional and ignorant and puzzle-headed people a few hundred thousand more puzzle-headed, ignorant, and emotional people who happen to wear petticoats.

And then, again, there is another point, and an important one. In America, as we have seen, "politician" means rascal. It does not mean that in England, so far; but it does mean in the great majority of instances dreary and windy bore, sham logician, insincere and gabbling humbug. The great statesman can be a politician in public, and live in private amongst his friends his own life, which is quite unsuspected by the vulgar. But the ordinary man who gets this rabid nonsense of politics into his brain becomes the terror of his club or of his tavern; his whole being deteriorates, he neglects all the true interests of life for the dismal trash of political debate. The big man is like the actor who can play Iago and then proceed merrily to the Green Room Club and be the best of company; the little man is Iago for every hour of the twenty-four.

And it seems a pity to poison, and corrupt, and destroy the source of all beauty and every Art with the driest, dreariest of all the delusions with which the wretched race of men has been afflicted since it was driven from the flaming portals of the Lost Garden.

It has often been urged that women have accomplished singularly little in the region of the arts. This, in a sense, is true; there have been very few supreme women-musicians, poets, architects, painters, or sculptors. But those who know see beneath every masterpiece the words "femina fecit;" and it is this fountain of beauty that the foolish suffrage-maniacs are endeavouring to pollute and destroy.

ARTHUR MACHEN.

## A GROUP OF FRENCHWOMEN

*Les Grandes Amoureuses.* By GASTON DERY. (Louis Michaud, Paris. 3f. 50c.)

*Ninon de Lenclos.* By ARNOULD GALOPIN. (Albin Michel, Paris. 3f. 50c.)

*La Générale Bonaparte.* By JOSEPH TURQUAND. (Tallandier, Paris. 6f.)

THE study of the lives of notable (and notorious) Frenchwomen of a bygone age has been of late years elevated almost to the proportions of a *genre* in literature. We are not quite sure to whom the personal credit of this phenomenon is due, but we are inclined to assign it, after making certain reservations in respect to chronology, to the brothers Goncourt. *Genre*-painting is admittedly not the loftiest kind of art, and there are few people who would place among the gods either the Goncourts or their precursor and perhaps master, Stendhal, for whose pen it is the custom of the modern biographer of this sort to long at least once in a volume. Another of his *chers maîtres* is naturally Sainte-Beuve, inventor of the modern *genre* of literary biography, though master of a far wider domain than most of his successors. More strangely we find the name of St. Augustine invoked over and over again by writers whose researches lead them into the kingdoms of love. In one of the present volumes, and the one that contains the warmest homage to this Father of the Church, we find held up for our admiration that extraordinary state of mind which may be described as being in love with the idea of love—a state of mind that Augustine, from the heights of his maturer wisdom, has explicitly condemned.

That the Frenchwoman should have been singled out from the whole of womankind to serve as model to a thousand artists of various capacities is a matter of history, and is, in a broad way, easily explicable. Vivacity and gaiety, characteristics of the whole French race, manifest themselves most graciously in the case of woman. In far-off pre-Suffragette days French women organised themselves not to compete with French men, but to civilise their common nation. The Hôtel de Rambouillet crystallised subsequently into the *Salon*, the *salons* became numerous, and an element of competition came to stimulate their energies; their civilising mission began to extend beyond the boundaries of France. English letters, for instance, owe a certain debt to the eighteenth-century *salon*. Literature was not the only field of feminine enterprise; the administration of the State, invaded in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was conquered, in all but externals, in the eighteenth, to be lost again under the Empire. We are far from wishing to say that this was a satisfactory state of affairs. We find, on the contrary, that the increase of female power was made at the expense of male efficiency, and that the result was disastrous. Men were a commodity sadly lacking in eighteenth-century France; the few that make some stir in history largely owe their position to their relations with women.

### "LES GRANDES AMOUREUSES."

M. Gaston Dery's work contains lives of Mlle. de Lespinasse, Marie Mancini, La Clairon, and Mme. de Tencin. The choice of subjects is characteristic; the method of dealing with them is more or less consecrated; it reminds us of a game of ninepins, with its complementary pleasures of setting up and knocking down. At least this may fairly be said of the last three, all perverse subjects, of various calibres. The choice of Julie de Lespinasse is more difficult to explain, except that she has become a sort of saint to the literary amorist. The present biographer seems to



regard the more dispassionate of his numerous predecessors as guilty of sacrilege. We do not think the admirable work of M. de Ségur need fear his censures.

#### NINON DE LENCLOS.

The story of Ninon de Lenclos has been told a good many times, but it is a story that deserves to be read once by every one, and M. Galopin's version is certainly readable. For one thing, it is very short, as far as the actual biography goes, and it is well and appositely illustrated. But the best feature of the volume is a collection of the letters of Ninon to the Marquis de Sévigné, letters of so admirable a quality that the good and talented Marquise might have found other grounds for rivalry with their writer than the affections of her son. The letters all deal with one subject—love: not as between the two correspondents; they are rather the opinions of an expert given to a novice who, having fallen in love, wishes to have the benefit of her experience. Ninon is not perverse; she has formed for herself a peculiar view of life, and she lived up to it with consistency and, we might almost say, with propriety. "Je me suis faite homme" is her own formula. Her wit was of the most brilliant order; Molière told her she could have bettered the "Tartufe," and he was probably sincere in his praise. Her maxims are as good as those of her friend La Rochefoucauld. She was in touch with all that was great in her century, and she helped to form Voltaire for the next.

#### LA GÉNÉRALE BONAPARTE.

M. Turquand's book on Joséphine de Beauharnais is a serious piece of history. He has a principle, which he proudly prints upon the title-page:—"L'Histoire et non la Légende." The Legend of which he wishes to dispose is the character of Joséphine as a pattern for devoted wives. But, unfortunately for Turquand's originality, others have been there before him; at the present stage of the controversy between Napoleon and his consort the balance is all in favour of the Corsican; book after book has appeared to point out the shortcomings of the first Empress of the French, the most noteworthy being M. Masson's "Napoléon et les Femmes," and the present enterprise seems rather like tilting at a mill. For all that the book is very interesting, as giving, within well-defined limits, the sequence of events which raised the frivolous, underbred, and under-educated Créole to be the wife of him who was first the great General of the Republic, then First Consul and then Consul for life. It also shows us how it became possible that she should fall from these heights, from the mere fact that they were so steep. M. Turquand does not take us as far as the Empire and the divorce; he also spares us the tedious account of the early years of Joséphine and her first marriage. He plunges in *medias res* with a slight but graphic description of Directoire society, a narrative of the wooing of Napoleon, and an analysis of the motives of the two parties to the marriage. Then follows the love-correspondence of the newly-wedded pair, and, though M. Turquand here joins hands rather too much for our liking with the Stendhal school, we cannot help feeling that it is the most interesting part of the book. "You!—and the rest of the world has no more existence for me than if it had been annihilated;" "The world is only beautiful to my eyes because you are in it"—such are some of the lyrical outpourings of the heart of Napoleon. Then comes disillusionment: "The whole world is but too happy if it can please you, and your husband alone is very unhappy." This is two or three days after Arcola!

There is little doubt that Napoleon was treated with extreme infidelity by his wife on more than one occasion. There is no doubt, moreover, that she would have ruined him subsequently with her extravagance had he not had the

resources of the State to draw on. Her habit of taking bribes for the Army contracts nearly led to a disaster. She did more than this: she received a pension from Fouché to spy on her husband. What is strange is that this curious pair settled down eventually to an existence of solid affection, only to be broken by the *raison d'état*. Another surprising thing is the success of Joséphine at the head of a Court; but this success, strange as it may seem, is incontestable. She is one of the three principal factors in the realisation of a Consular Court; the others were the unexampled national prosperity and the efforts of that old courtier Talleyrand. It was a Court that might have been laughed out of existence at the outset. At first, for instance, there were no carriages; cabs, with the numbers covered over, served for the receptions. And yet out of it sprang the brilliant Imperial Court. M. Turquand is rather irritating when he continues to harp on the sarcastic string. Page after page we find the "elle était si bonne, cette Joséphine" at the end of some incident exhibiting her heartlessness. But he rejects stupid and useless scandals, and in such a way that we do not return to them to wonder if they are true. On the whole, he has written an interesting work and an undeniably painstaking one.

#### A DISILLUSIONED TRAVELLER

*Japan for a Week. (Britain for Ever.)* By A. M. THOMPSON. Illustrated. (John Lane. 5s.)

MR. THOMPSON has chosen to write a necessary book in unnecessary language. That is to say, the standpoint from which he views his subject is considerably more bracing than the crude way he gives it expression. But not only is his style crude. Being this it might yet be the expression of some degree of dignity. It is cheap, which is a sufficiently condign punishment of any book. Whatever Mr. Thompson lacks, he does not lack temerity. To write, as he does, with the voice if not the substance of authority after but a week's hurried visit through a country full of problems is a "tripper's" exploit indeed. In extenuation for Mr. Thompson he it said that less than a hundred of his 250 pages are taken up with its title-subject of Japan. The greater bulk of it treats of the tour in which Japan was but a week's parenthesis.

Germany, Russia, Siberia, Japan, China, the route home by the Red Sea, Blatchfordism—that is the scope of this book, despite the Japanese insignia blazoning the cover, and its interest lies in the fact that the author has not borne with him the customary sentimentalities of the traveller. He has prejudices enough, but they are at least refreshing by reason of their novelty. As an instance of this happy detachment may be cited his description of the Cathedral of Basil the Happy in Moscow. To him it is an "architectural monstrosity." He will give it no tribute of sentimental rapture. "It violates every notion of harmony and beauty," he writes. "It is an artistic nightmare." The things, moreover, to which the hardened traveller is accustomed awake him to fury—such as, for instance, the indignities of Customs or the modern enormity of police surveillance of foreigners in Russia. Nor are these unimportant points. Such matters lend the personal note, and make the value of the volume. Moreover, they add a further value—a value, as one might say, *en route*—for they are earnest that when Mr. Thompson comes to the main theme of his book he will not be inclined to take things for granted. This cannot but whet the appetite of a reader, for Japanese subjects are beginning to be treated

with such uniform sameness that one is driven to doubt the truth of the picture presented.

Nor is this earnest belied by subsequent discovery. It was not only a Japan of picturesque lanterns, graceful wistaria, significant temples, and pretty mousmés overhung by a perpetually awe-inspiring Fujiyama, that Mr. Thompson discovered in the Far East. He discovered a country working at high pressure from four o'clock in the morning till ten and eleven at night, its inhabitants miserably paid for the most part, the women doing the heaviest drudgery and receiving the poorest of remuneration; a country with an enormous percentage of prostitution, with accompanying disease; aping European civilisation but clinging to all the crudities of the Eastern social polity; with the mass of its population lacking even the simplest of education, and superstitious to a degree; a country in which a canker was at work, destroying the people's pristine love of beauty and simplicity, bringing with it the results of a culture alien to its own, without passing it through the processes that alone make those results worth the having.

It is as though a child were advanced suddenly into manhood without any of the tuition of experience. Instead of one beauty succeeding naturally to another beauty, it is beauty suddenly smitten to ugliness. In fact, the external fact regarding Japan as a nation has its ideograph in the very lives of its peoples. The keen pressure for premature maturity in national experience has not only destroyed Japan as a national expression, it is ruining the lives of its units. To use Mr. Thompson's own words:—

The wrinkled, mummified, old, old faces and bent backs of the old people in the streets had begun, too, to prey upon my imagination. There appeared to be no middle-aged people in Japan. From the chattering, light-hearted, sturdy young rickshaw boys and giggling waitresses of the hotel, Japanese humanity seemed to drop in one sudden *débâcle* to senility and decrepitude. The workers here evidently cannot become "too old at forty," for none of them seem to attain to that age; those that have passed twenty, especially the women, look about a hundred.

Allowing for Mr. Thompson's unfortunately exaggerative manner of writing, there is deep truth in this; the units of a nation cannot have more than their national expression, and the nation itself has known no middle-age. It was found in its childhood's love of simple great things by the mature, not altogether wisely mature, civilisation of a different hemisphere. Japan determined to achieve that civilisation, and in a surpassingly short space of time succeeded. But it succeeded at the cost of all its naïveté, its health, its stature, and its just and proper national expression. These are things it is well to recognise about our ally in the East. Of the subtler and more invidious question of the disease that is corrupting the nation, Mr. Thompson does not speak. Indeed, it is very doubtful if his short visit would serve to bring this before him; but it is a deep and peculiar problem.

On the question of the degradation of woman (and its acutest feature, the extraordinary facility of divorce afforded to husbands) he has some fitting words to say. "In this one respect," he says, "Japan remains as Oriental as Turkey." This is a confusing sentence at best. The Oriental treatment of women, taken as extending from Asia Minor to the far Pacific, is a sufficiently varied one to require differentiation. In some ways the Japanese treatment is considerably lower in the scale than the Turkish. It could scarcely be said in Turkey, for instance, that a man divorced wife after wife to the number of ten "before finding the perfectly gentle and obedient slave demanded by his fastidious taste," having possibly burdened them all with the support of children. A nation that gives its women rank

somewhere between cattle and men is foredoomed to failure unless it learns to mend the error of its ways.

Possibly because of the time of the year Mr. Thompson chose for his visit he does not appear to have been much taken with what is still beautiful in Japan. He does not give the charm of the Inland Sea less than its just due, but he is noticeably deficient with regard to the beauties elsewhere to be observed. He is right, however, in refusing to see beauty where social conditions are abject and miserable. It might have been that the writer of the following witticism was one scarcely temperamentally adapted to the discovery of natural beauty. He is on his return journey in the straits of Malacca, which prompts him to a display of humour: "The heat," he says, "at this point was so terrific that I was too sleepy to sit up to my meals, and on several occasions I had to hire deck-hands to smoke my cigars for me. According to Courtneidge, who is an old and experienced traveller, we were now 'within sight of the Equator,' but though I borrowed his new marine-glasses and, by the way, forgot to return them—I am not really sure that I saw it!" The illustrations in this book are good, as far as they go, but they are somewhat incomplete.

### LECKY'S "EUROPEAN MORALS"

*History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne.*

By W. E. H. LECKY. (Longmans, Green and Co. 2s. 6d. net.)

NEARLY forty-two years have elapsed since this famous work came from Lecky's brilliant pen, and Messrs. Longmans have now issued it in a new edition at a purely nominal price. The two volumes are bound together in one, which, as it contains over nine hundred pages of print, is somewhat bulky, though at the same time we find it pleasantly light, and even easy, to handle.

The principal question to be considered on re-examining a work of this character, so many years after its original publication, is whether it has stood the test of time in such a way as to remain an adequate presentment of its subject, in spite of the advances made in historical knowledge and the progress of human thought. In that connection it may be mentioned that Lecky subjected his text to a minute and careful revision for an edition produced in 1877; and, in spite of the long period which has since gone by, we find, on now reperusing the revised text, that in all essential respects the book remains emphatically a live one, such, indeed, as no writer of the present time, dealing with any of the numerous subjects which it embraces, could possibly afford to ignore. It covers, as its title indicates, so vast a field that in some respects it could never, even under the best circumstances, completely satisfy the more zealous student and inquirer; but even in those instances it conveys a large variety of information and stimulates one to further and more precise research. By the light which it sheds on the morals, the religions, the philosophies, the manners and the customs of the ancient world, it comes well within the category of those works which Mr. Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, in a recent brilliant article in this journal, so aptly defined as belonging to True History. Take, for instance, the long, but by no means too long, chapter on the Conversion of Rome. As you read it you feel yourself carried back to the very time when the events which are recounted were taking place.

There is just one matter on which, to our thinking, Lecky might well have enlarged, while he was picturing the morals of the pagan and Christian Empires. Dean Merivale once laid down the proposition that the bases of human society



were money and matrimony, and that everything depended on the right use of money and the right relations of the sexes. Now the earlier editions of Mommsen's History of Rome had already appeared before this work of Lecky's was published, and Mommsen had pointed out how largely questions of finance and economics had influenced both social and political occurrences in the Roman world. Of more recent years several Italian scholars, notably Cicotti and Salvioi, have fully investigated that subject, and by the light of modern research and discovery, the decline and fall of Rome can no longer be pictured exactly as Gibbon pictured it. The relation between money and morals is obvious; but although Lecky by no means ignored it, we feel that in the work before us he did not allot to this particular part of his theme nearly so much space as it really deserved. On the relations of the sexes, however, he wrote amply, firmly, and precisely, though without any offensiveness; and his section on the position of women in ancient society is particularly illuminating. It was quoted by more than one witness at the sittings of the recent Commission on the Divorce Laws; and it should also appeal to all who are in any way interested in the various Feminist movements of the present time.

On some other points one may not always agree with Lecky's views, but much that will enlighten the mind or stimulate it to think is to be found in the pages of this graphically written and learned book; and Messrs. Longmans are to be thanked for having now placed it within the reach of the great mass of the reading public.

## MODERNISM AND THE RESURRECTION

*The Resurrection Narratives and Modern Criticism.* By THOMAS JAMES THORBURN, D.D., LL.D. (Kegan Paul and Co. 6s. net.)

THIS work is a masterly critique of Professor Schmiedel's article, "Resurrection Narratives," in the "Encyclopedia Biblica," on the theory of Subjective Hallucinations, based upon the Vision theory of Strauss and Renan. The writer, not without reason, traverses certain canons of modern criticism, and primarily that *petitio principii* involved in the assumption of "the impossibility, and therefore the utter unreality, of the (so-called) supernatural." But, as he justly observes, "if there be no 'supernatural,' what need for any discussion of such matters at all? In such a case we admit the necessary inference at once; *quæstio cadit*, and religion is an empty dream." So we are reminded of Professor Huxley's aphorism: "I am unaware of anything that has a right to the title of an 'impossibility,' except a contradiction in terms." But some of the German and other negative critics start with a syllogism after this sort: The Resurrection story involves the supernatural: there is no supernatural—*ergo*, it must be hallucination. Next, with great ingenuity and painful industry, they seek out every discrepancy that can be found in the various contemporary narratives. Schmiedel has "improved" upon Reimarus by discovering twenty to the ten of the "Wolfenbüttel Fragments." Dr. Thorburn shows that the majority of these, so far from being insurmountable, are valuable in themselves as evidence against that sort of collusion on the part of witnesses which belongs to a too carefully prepared accuracy. To our thinking, the differences among critics themselves are highly significant. They are ever shifting their ground. Some attack each other even more caustically than they impeach the Evangelists. If we set Neander and Renan against Paulus and Strauss, or the holders of the Apparition theory and those

who believe in theories of Fraud or Conspiracy, we find that the criticisms "absurd" or "impossible" are used by critics of each others' views quite as readily as of the Gospel discrepancies. In considering the theory of Hallucination Dr. Thorburn discusses at some length the probable conditions of mind of the Apostles consequent upon the catastrophe of the Crucifixion, which he believes were "certainly not conditions favourable to that receptivity of mind, that ecstatic state, which is so fruitful in visions, and other creations of the 'subjective' mind. In short, we can see none of the conditions which might favour such an hypothesis. There is panic and confusion and doubt and anxiety—the only certainty being (apparently) that the Cause was lost—but no signs of even unconscious preparation for a complete system of self-delusion, and the reconstruction under new conditions of a shattered ideal."

Professor Schmiedel makes an amazing statement when he says: "There is to be drawn from the various accounts one deduction, which goes very deep—*no words were heard from the risen Jesus.*" Dr. Thorburn supposes that he "means that the reported words are not credible." But surely reported words have as much claim to credibility, on the hallucination hypothesis, as reported visions. Professor Schmiedel's method of criticism becomes unsound, when he separates hallucinations of the ear from those of the eye. He also fails to grasp the distinction between the natural (*ψυχικόν*) body and the spiritual (*πνευματικόν*) body, for he argues "that Jesus was buried, and that He has been raised cannot be affirmed by any one who has not the re-animation of the body in view." That was the resurrection of Lazarus, with his identical material body, which subsequently died again. And, as Dr. Thorburn well points out, such a resurrection would be no phantasm of hallucination, but a mere revivification of the former body. Setting aside the alternative idea of resurrection of the spirit only, Dr. Thorburn states that Christian doctrine which Professor Schmiedel considers quite inconceivable—belief in the Pauline teaching of a spiritual body. And as Professor Mahaffy has observed, it was the preaching of that doctrine of the Resurrection which reformed the world.

In his able criticism, we think that Dr. Thorburn has fairly shown that certain of Professor Schmiedel's theories are destructive of each other, and that, "to be consistent, he should take his place amongst those who deny the very historic existence of Jesus."

## FANTASY AND PARODY

*Diminutive Dramas.* By MAURICE BARING. (Constable and Co. 4s. 6d. net.)

THE author of the entertaining "Dead Letters" has an unerring touch on the keys of comedy—that delicate instrument which can be so mishandled and maltreated by inexperienced or careless players—and throughout these dramas in miniature the reader is kept on the verge of laughter; is stimulated, as it were, to smiles, without ever being provoked to the crude, inopportune guffaw. Classical themes, treated in a style which we might term the jovial-academic were it not that "jovial" seems rather too rotund and rollicking a word for Mr. Baring's wit, form a fairly large proportion of the sketches in this volume, as might be anticipated; but the little modern dialogues and conversations which are interspersed leaven the whole and relieve it from any tendency to monotony.

Parodists have frequently attempted to dazzle our eyes with the flash of mirrors illumined by M. Maeterlinck's bright flame, but Mr. Baring intensifies the light of his

"Blue Harlequin" by the nearness of his approach to the original. The scene is a London street—foggy, of course; the properties are those of the antiquated harlequinade; policeman, pantaloons, clown and columbine meet and go through a solemn burlesque in the unmistakable Maeterlinck manner. Better than this, however, is the delightful satire entitled "The Member for Literature," in which Mr. Max Beerbohm, Mr. Hall Caine, Mr. Kipling and Mr. Jerome are supposed to be candidates for election to the House of Commons. They address an audience whose voting is to decide their fate. The speech of the inimitable "Max" is a very pretty bit of fooling; he is extremely anxious not to be elected, and his peroration is greeted by "discreet cheers":—

I think I have now lightly shaken by the hand those questions which, as the phrase goes, are at issue, and although I have not given you my reasons in clauses, headings, and sections, I hope I have made it perspicuous to you that I do not wish to be a Member of Parliament, and that were I to be chosen I should not lift my eye-glass to justify your choice; I would not sacrifice the whiff of a cigarette for all the perfumes of St. Stephen's.

Mr. Jerome makes the only popular joke of the evening, and captures a huge majority; the reader may "point the moral and adorn the tale" if he pleases.

Of the extravaganzas set in classic times we like best "Xantippe and Socrates." The idea of a clever but hen-pecked husband whose shrew of a wife distorts his most innocent observations into causes for quarrel, and "nags" him persistently until we wonder that he does not turn and rend her, is not new; but to make Socrates the hen-pecked one is just that touch which Mr. Baring delights to give; without this it might almost be a rarefied fantasy by Mr. Pett Ridge, spoken by a cockney virago and her partner. Some very modern conversations between ancient heroes and heroines are here presented in the same piquant mode. Those who have already seen these "Diminutive Dramas" in the columns of the *Morning Post* will be glad to glance through them again in this more permanent form, while readers to whom they are unfamiliar may be assured of a recreative hour.

## FICTION

*Denis Trench: A Plotless History of How He Followed the Gleam and Worked Out His Own Salvation.* By Mrs. H. H. PENROSE. (Alston Rivers. 6s.)

MRS. PENROSE calls her book a "plotless history," and the reader therefore looks to find one of those interminable chronicles of the smallest of small beer which are sometimes dignified by the name of "studies in prose." He is disappointed, however, and finds plenty of plot and incident, luxurious character-drawing, and a certain quantity of very pleasant humour, which might have been added with a much more liberal hand. Denis Trench and his sister Kitten were left virtual orphans when their father became a Roman Catholic priest and their mother died of the shock. How Denis made his gradual way to literary fame and domestic happiness ("following the gleam" Mrs. Penrose calls the process) is the subject of the book. The latter task proved the more difficult, as Denis sacrificed himself on the altar of matrimony to save the non-existent reputation of an Irish girl whom he met in revisiting the scenes of his childhood. This young lady afterwards gave him a great deal of trouble; but a street accident and a fondness for whiskey at length carried her off, and he was free to marry his poetess. Mrs. Penrose gushes a good deal about her hero's literary achievements, and her way of regarding such matters appears a little artless. In one place we get a

charmingly, if unconsciously, humorous glimpse of an editor waiting patiently for—of all things in newspaperdom—a sonnet.

*Hawtreys Deputy.* By HAROLD BINDLOSS. (Ward, Lock and Co. 6s.)

To whatever corner of the world Mr. Harold Bindloss brings us—and he seems to be familiar with most of them—he may always be trusted to spin a good yarn of adventure and hard work and love, for he is a born story-teller. There is a pleasing directness about his method of narration, and he shows a due regard for the common sense of his readers in drawing his characters, so that we do not feel that we are moving in a world inhabited only by angels and devils. Perhaps he makes too much use of coincidence, and in these sophisticated days it seems a little primitive to involve your male characters in accidents in order to prove the courage of your women; Mr. Bindloss performs this latter feat twice in the book under notice. But these are small strictures when the story as a whole is satisfactory, and we are sure that the author's readers will have no fault to find with "Hawtreys Deputy" on that score. The scene is laid mainly in Western Canada and Kamtschatka, and there is enough local colour to give the book a convincing background. It should make the author some new friends.

*Gilead Balm, Knight Errant: His Adventures in Search of the Truth.* By BERNARD CAPES. Illustrated. (Fisher Unwin. 6s.)

SINCE he wrote the "Lake of Wine" Mr. Bernard Capes has come a long way, and, like too many of our novelists, he seems to have discarded part of his individuality on the road. "Gilead Balm" is one of those series of short stories linked together by a tenuous plot, of which we understand editors of popular magazines are excessively fond. As a matter of fact it is quite a good example of its class; but though Mr. Capes has had the happy idea of exploiting the agony column to provide his hero with fitting adventures, the volume as a whole does not escape the air of scrappiness that seems inseparable from books founded on this unhappy plan. Yet, considered separately, some of the stories are highly ingenious, and one at all events is thrilling, and we do not doubt that they will please a large number of excellent judges of fiction. On the plane of popular art we would have praised "Gilead Balm" without reserve; but we know that the author is capable of better things.

## SHAW ON SHAKESPEARE: AN OPEN LETTER

MY DEAR SHAW—

Once upon a time, it is said, Tolstoi and Turgenief quarrelled, and Tolstoi, the apostle of peace, proposed to decide the question with pistols. At this every one roared with laughter except the two protagonists. You and I, Shaw, had a little difference, and settled it in a round or two of words. Now, long after the heat of conflict has evaporated, you come out with an attack on me six columns long in *The Nation*, in the guise of a review of my Shakespeare play. Again I accept the challenge, for the game amuses me and the prize will be divided between us. Besides, you are too angry to do yourself justice; you cannot even hit straight. Fancy having to teach the peace-loving Shaw that no one conquers another by slandering and insulting him any more than by beating or killing him! The only way to conquer me, Shaw, is by being more generous to me than I can be to you; surpass me in that, and my arms fall of themselves. But you are angry; you first blow hot and then cold; you compare my book on Shakespeare to



Darwin's "Origin of Species," and the next moment you talk of it as "a volume of criticism fifteen years late," whatever that may mean. You declare in one breath that everything I write is of "high and peculiar literary quality," and in the next that I have written nothing but "a few short stories" which were not even reviewed by the Philistines—as if that mattered even were it true.

As a critic, Shaw, you reach the nadir. "The treatment" (*sic*) in my play you assert is "neither modern nor Elizabethan"—or, rather, it is both by turns. Shakespeare sometimes quotes himself and sometimes says such things as "What wine of life you pour!" which comes right dramatically, but is impossible historically. (Shakespeare only once makes a metaphor of wine, when Macbeth, pretending to be horrified at the discovery of Duncan's bleeding corpse, says, "The wine of life is drawn; and the mere lees is left this vault to brag of.") That is, you assert that a saying I've put in Shakespeare's mouth is "impossible historically," and then prove that Shakespeare used the very words.

Now why not have told the truth, Shaw; the phrase "the wine of life" seemed to you "impossible historically," all too modern to be chronologically correct, but when you looked it up you found that I was right. Now if you had simply said this, simply told the truth, the generous acknowledgment would have done you good, freed your liver of the bilious, vain ill-humour which is blinding you, and done me good too; that would have been worthy of Shaw. You preferred the boomerang again: what you thought "impossible historically" merely proves your ill-will. That is what I call hitting your own fists, Shaw, and it is not the way of the great fighters.

Let us confine ourselves to fair hitting—in other words, keep to the facts. You wrote a play and called it "The Dark Lady of the Sonnets." You went out of your way to say in an interview that you owed the character of the "Dark Lady" to Tyler and to the sonnets, and not to me. Your words were, "All the honours must go to Tyler." Forced to defend myself, I proved beyond dispute that you owed the character of your "Dark Lady" not to Tyler nor to the sonnets, but to my work on Shakespeare, and that the title of your play was purposely misleading. You now acknowledge the fact and proceed to heap insults on me and pile mis-statements on mis-statements. You are superior to me, you say, because you read every word I write and crib from me, and my work is "impoverished" by my determination not to crib from you. You are resolved to miss the point, Shaw. I didn't protest against your cribbing from me in your playlet; you cribbed from me ten years ago, in almost every preface to your plays, and I said nothing. I always joyed to see you wearing my livery and doing homage to my intellect. I only protested when you declared in advance that the livery was not mine. Then I tucked your head under my arm and proceeded to demonstrate to you that to fight with your eyes shut to facts was to get hurt. You must not miss this point. It is not the cribbing that I object to—not even the cribbing without acknowledgment—but the cribbing buttressed by mis-statement. You say all able men must crib, and your coat is already a Jacob's coat of many colours; but you must not say that the patch on your coat taken from Darwin is taken from Chambers' "Vestiges of Creation," and you must not say that the trousers you have borrowed from me belonged first to Tyler and not to me; that is not cricket, Shaw, even as the game is played to-day.

That point being clear, we can get on. I've just read your article through again to see if there is anything serious in it, any word that flies straight and quivers arrow-like in the clout. Not one solitary word of criticism, if I'm a judge; here and there a word of praise seems right, but all too grudging—mean. Surely, Shaw, you could have

done better than this, helped me a little, put your finger on some oversight or patent blunder. Still, here is your contention. You state that "Shakespeare is not to be found" in my play, but only "the melancholy Dane." I have represented Shakespeare, you declare, "as a snivelling, broken-hearted swain, dying because he was jilted." Shaw! Shaw! Do you really think that misrepresentation can hurt; or would it relieve you to call St. Francis a "snivelling swain"?

But in all your windmill-hitting and excitement you keep driving at this point—that I have presented Shakespeare as too melancholy and too gentle—weak. You don't take into consideration that I am dealing with the middle-aged Shakespeare, who is rallied at the beginning of the play for having lost much of his old gaiety and light-heartedness. But, putting aside the wild hitting, you stand opposed to me, and sum up all your objections in one straight phrase. You say, "All Shakespeare's heroes died game." Here, at any rate, we have a definite statement, not contradicted a paragraph later, but repeated and amplified with stout adjectives. You refer to Hamlet, and talk of Shakespeare as "bullying" and "reviling." Now let us take the tragedies of his maturity one by one and see if you are right.

Brutus is, of course, the hero of "Julius Caesar," and Brutus dies game, according to Shaw. When Brutus takes farewell of his friends he says:—

So fare you well at once; for Brutus' tongue  
Hath almost ended his life's history:  
Night hangs upon mine eyes; my bones would rest,  
That have but labour'd to attain this hour . . .

Is there no melancholy here, Shaw—despairing melancholy that longs for rest, that, finds no goal but the grave?

Then take his next speech:—

I prithee, Strato, stay thou by thy lord:  
Thou art a fellow of a good respect;  
Thy life hath had some smatch of honour in it:  
Hold then my sword, and turn away thy face,  
While I do run upon it. Wilt thou, Strato? . . .

Now I say nothing about the snobbishness which requires Strato as an instrument of death to be honourable and of good respect, but Brutus is a great captain, and he asks his servant, "Wilt thou, Strato?" Surely in the supreme hour the general who dies game orders and does not beg. Brutus, however, is not obeyed by any of his servants, and has to kill himself by running on his own sword, and this is his final word:—

. . . Caesar, now be still:  
I killed thee not with half so good a will.

Is this the gentle, melancholy, humane Shakespeare I have painted, or the "bullying, reviling" Shakespeare, whose heroes all "die game," of Bernard Shaw?

Next comes "Hamlet." Hamlet dies, saying to his friend Horatio:—

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,  
Absent thee from felicity awhile,  
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,  
To tell my story . . .

Death is "felicity" then to Hamlet, and to live is "pain;" he will have his story told to the "harsh world." Is this Hamlet the melancholy, gentle-hearted, humane Shakespeare I have depicted, or the "bullying, reviling" Shakespeare who dies game of Shaw? Hamlet goes on:—

The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:  
The rest is silence.

I like your idea, Shaw, of dying game. Then comes *Othello*, and here, if anywhere, you should be justified.

Othello was a fighting man, a hero of the swashbuckler sort in the approved Shaw sense. Othello kills himself after a long, pathetic speech, in which he prays the world at large to speak of him as one—

. . . that loved not wisely, but too well;  
and his very last words are :—

. . . no way but this;  
Killing myself to die upon a kiss.

This is Bernard Shaw's idea of dying game. Antony is supposed to be another of the swashbuckling heroes, and Antony dies like Othello. Almost his last words are :—

Of many thousand kisses the poor last,  
I lay upon thy lips.

All Shakespeare's favourite heroes seem to die on a kiss. And this is Shaw's idea of dying game. From one point of view there is something to be said for the contention; but that point of view is hardly Shaw's.

Poor Lear is killed by Cordelia's death. Kent tells us that he has followed Lear's "sad steps," and the old King dies gazing at his dead daughter :—

. . . Thou'lt come no more,  
Never, never, never, never, never ! . . .  
. . . Look at her, look, her lips,  
Look there, look there !

The lips again, and again Shaw's idea of dying game is to wag grey head in despair and cry, "Never, never, never." . . . This time, Shaw, it looks as if you had knocked yourself out. Or must I show you the melancholy despair of Macbeth and Troilus and Timon ? "All Shakespeare's heroes died game." What ridiculous absurdity ! All that letter-writing, Shaw, to the *Times* has dulled your quick intelligence.

In your insane desire to differ from me you have reached a pitch of still wilder madness. You say "to the end there was a mighty music in him (Shakespeare) and outrageous gaiety." Well, the Elizabethan stage, like, indeed, every stage in England, always asked for farce and tomfoolery, always demanded the so-called "comic-relief," as no one knows better than Shaw with his "Chocolate Soldiers" and "Brassbound Captains." Shakespeare tried to provide low farce for his audiences even at the end, even in his last play, "The Tempest." But would Shaw call Caliban, the poor earth-creature who adores the man as a god who gives him drink, a proof of "outrageous gaiety" or drunken Trinculo or Stephano ? I think all these are the outcome of Shakespeare's bitterness; but after all the heart of "The Tempest" is not to be found in Caliban, but in Prospero. Now in Prospero one would think that Shakespeare would be at his gayest. Prospero has won his heart's desire; he is going back home to rule, going back to the library he loved "beyond his dukedom," going to witness the "nuptials" of his "dearly beloved" daughter. Surely his joy may now reach "outrageous gaiety." Well, here are his words :—

And thence retire me to my Milan, where  
Every thought shall be my grave.

Your idea of "outrageous gaiety" is funereal. And Prospero goes on in the famous Epilogue which contains Shakespeare's last word to men :—

Now I want,  
Spirits to enforce, art to enchant,  
And my ending is despair,  
Unless I be relieved by prayer,  
Which pierces so that it assaults  
Mercy itself and frees all faults.  
As you from crimes would pardon'd be,  
Let your indulgence set me free.

This sad-hearted, hopeless appeal, this despairing prayer for mercy is Bernard Shaw's idea of "outrageous gaiety." Now every one can see how much I "impoverish" myself by obstinately refusing to borrow from you any of your ideas about Shakespeare. The truth is Shaw knows nothing about Shakespeare, and is too old, I am afraid, to learn about him from me. I love and honour Shakespeare, and have given years of my life to his service; Shaw tries to evolve him out of his internal consciousness and then jeers at his puppet.

Now a few words as to Shaw's view of Frank Harris. Shaw quotes a piece of my prose in which he says I give my own picture :—

Whoever will be one of "God's spies," as Shakespeare called them, must spend years in some waste place, some solitude of desert or mountain, resolutely stripping himself of the time-garment of his own paltry ego, alone with the stars and night winds, giving himself to thoughts that torture, to a wrestling with the angel that baffles and exhausts. But at length the travail of his soul is rewarded; suddenly, without warning, the spirit that made the world uses him as a mouthpiece and speaks through him. In an ecstasy of humility and pride—"a reed shaken by the wind"—he takes down the message. Years later, when he gives the gospel to the world, he finds that men mock and jeer at him, tell him he is crazy, or, worse still, declare they know the fellow, and ascribe to him their own lusts and knaveries. No one believes him or will listen, and when he realises his own loneliness his heart turns to water, and he himself begins to doubt his inspiration. That is the lowest hell. Then, in his misery and despair, comes one man who accepts his message as authentic-true; one man who shows in the very words of his praise that he, too, has seen the Beatific Vision, has listened to the Divine voice. At once the prophet is saved: the sun irradiates his icy dungeon; the desert blossoms like a rose; his solitude sings with choirs invisible. Such a disciple is spoken of ever afterwards as the beloved and set apart above all others.

Shaw's comment on this is :

This remarkable portrait has every merit except that of resemblance to any Frank Harris known to me or to financial or journalistic London.

But which is the real Frank Harris—or rather, which is the real Shaw, the man as he sees himself or as others see him. That's the gift we men should pray for—that others might see us as we see ourselves. Shaw has given us the best picture of himself, I think, in the guise of Caesar. His Caesar speaks of himself as a Sphinx. I take it that it is Shaw speaking of himself, and it is the most interesting thing in any of his plays or writings so far. For nothing is so interesting as egotism when a man has an ego. Your ordinary egotist is a bore, because he will never talk about himself. He cannot; he has no self to talk about. He is under the impression that everything that has happened to him is personal and peculiar. Whereas the truth is, nearly everything that has happened to him has happened to everybody else, and to tell it bores everybody, for everybody would prefer to hear himself tell the same thing. But your egoist who possesses an ego talks about himself, tells things that are true to him and to no one else, unexpected, wonderful things, and thus becomes enormously interesting at once—more interesting than Peary and his North Pole, because he makes us see the Pole and centre of the world. His unique and powerful personality is in direct and intimate relation with the centre of gravity of the Universe. Shaw in German Jaeger clothing and unkempt beard, eating weeds and drinking water, only shocks old maids and young maids too with his unnecessary livid complexion. Shaw as a peripatetic Don Quixote running about from platform to platform for five-and-twenty years bragging that he



is the cleverest men alive; Shaw the Fabian president pretending that the chopped straw of Mrs. Sidney Webb or the pseudo-science of Wells is nourishment for the soul; Shaw misrepresenting Shakespeare and maligning Harris—all these incarnations of Shaw only make the vulgar smile and the judicious grieve. I refuse obstinately and in spite of a thousand witnesses to take any of these for the real Shaw. All these are but the claws and tail of the monster. But the truth about the sphinx must be told as she tells it herself; she is half brute and half woman, she says, and as I have enough of the brute in me to know all about that half, I see Shaw as a woman, with all a woman's quick insight into shams and a woman's quick eye for little faults and conceits, and a woman's genius for romance, and a woman's sympathy with suffering, and a woman's intuition of all high things. That Shaw is very interesting to me, even though he has never shown me that soul-side and even though it is entirely unknown to the financiers and journalists of London. I only wish to God he would show us more of it and less of the flippertygibbet.

Each of us, Shaw, who live on the forehead of the time to come must not only educate our audience and our critics directly as you have done, or indirectly as I have tried to do in the passage you quote by creating my own "legend;" and if the "legend" is great enough and interesting enough, it will in its own good time create the critics and the audience as well. There is nothing the world wants so much as a new "legend." My "legend" you have tried to make fun of: I have done my best to see your "legend" as you see it yourself. Fancy Shaw telling the world that I have played financier and established weekly journals and go to and fro in the streets of London and got splashed with its fetid mud and warmed both hands at the fire of life, and other parts too, and yet have managed to write stories which he compares to those of de Maupassant, and a book of criticism which he compares to Darwin's "Origin of Species," and a play which he declares in characterisation is Shakespearean, and yet he will have every one believe I am a mere *viveur* who give my best powers to pleasure. That monster, Shaw, is wholly incredible. You say you have read every word I have written about Shakespeare; you tell me that my book is great, that you wrote pages and pages on it. What did Pascal say?—"If a book interests you, if it seems strong to you, you may be sure that the man who wrote it wrote it on his knees." My "legend" may be true, Shaw; think—or is Pascal's level too high for you? Even Boswell sees more than Johnson's gluttony and porpoise self-indulgence; even Boswell sees his honesty and leonine courage and truth, the soul of him; fancy Shaw content to see less than a Boswell, as little as "financial or journalistic London."

Take heed, Shaw; you are in the foremost files; yet you go about borrowing without assimilating; fighting without conquering; wasting your fine powers in skits and squibs. You need a fillip. You must not play the woman and run away from facts any longer.

Yet I cannot part from Shaw as if he had altogether missed his mission; it would not be fair to him. Others will give prominence to his little eccentricities and personal peculiarities; others will see that his feet are like other men's feet and stand in this world's mud. But I have admired and still admire and love the brave soul in Shaw, and the gleaming, keen sword with which this modern Jack the Giant-killer has slain stout English shams and may still be trusted to kill more of our giant English hypocrisies, and if he has mis-seen me as he has certainly mis-seen Shakespeare, perhaps after all the loss is more his than mine.

Yours faithfully,  
FRANK HARRIS.

Nice, January 20th, 1911.

## THE THEATRE

### "THE WITNESS FOR THE DEFENCE" AT THE ST. JAMES'S THEATRE

Of all the managers in London Mr. George Alexander has done the most for, and the best by, English playwrights. He conducts his theatre on the most excellent business principles. It has an atmosphere entirely its own, and all the plays produced upon its stage are managed, mounted, and dressed in the most artistic and charming manner. In addition, Mr. Alexander is careful to surround himself with the ablest actors available. That being so, a first night at the St. James's is an interesting event to playgoers. The recent production of Mr. A. E. W. Mason's new play was exceptionally interesting for several reasons. Mr. Mason is of course, a deservedly popular novelist. He has "The Four Feathers," "The Broken Road," and many other good, sound, exciting, and well-written books to his credit. He has made several not too successful attempts to write plays—one or two without the assistance of a collaborator, two or three in collaboration. "The Witness for the Defence" is, however, a play to which Mr. Mason's name stands alone, and it is not, we are given to understand, an adaptation, but an original work—that is, a work written first of all, for acting purposes. We have before wondered, after having witnessed the performance of Mr. Mason's plays, whether he would be able to forget his excellent methods as a novelist and write a play in the manner of a playwright.

"The Witness for the Defence" provided us with an admirable opportunity of judging. There can be no possible question as to the verdict. Mr. Mason is not a playwright. While he has a very marked sense of dramatic effect, he entirely lacks that curious, inborn, unacquirable sense of the theatre which goes to the making of a wholly good play. He lacks, also, the trick of creating character without the aid of the useful chapter, and he has not mastered the difficult art, essential to the playwright, of holding tight to his plot. His latest play, although very interesting, suggests more than ever the hand of the novelist, and has the air of being a number of chapters torn from their binding and placed into the hands of a stage-manager with nothing to connect them together. Then, too, Mr. Mason the novelist has undermined Mr. Mason the dramatist by not having the knowledge of how to make convincing in his play what he would have had no trouble to have made convincing in a novel, and the result is that his *scène à faire*, the very centre of and reason for his play, very nearly goes for nothing.

Throughout his manipulation of his characters is peculiarly childlike and careless. He makes them do, not what they would do under the existing circumstances, but just what he wants them to do to bring about a situation. In short, Mr. Mason is not yet any nearer to the writing of a good play than he ever was, and but for the finished acting in "A Witness for the Defence" we cannot think that it would have gone safely through the ordeal of a first performance. In the hands of Miss Ethel Irving, Stella lived and breathed. We have not hitherto found much to admire in Miss Irving's work. Her unrestrained hysteria upon the stage got badly upon our nerves. But in Mr. Mason's play Miss Irving plays with an excellent restraint and a sincerity that convinces even against one's common sense. Her part was full of repetition, and all on one key, and yet Miss Irving handled it with an art which made it vital and human. Her big scene with Mr. Alexander was very moving, and although we cannot agree with those of the critics who find genius in her work we are able and delighted to give her the highest praise for an admirable performance. Mr. George Alexander brought all his ease of manner and sure-

ness of touch to bear upon his unsympathetic part, and almost managed to render its inconsistencies consistent. All the other parts were in safe hands, and nothing could have been more excellent than the acting of that accomplished artist, Mr. Alfred Bishop, who made a tiresome old man quite lovable. It goes without saying that the play was beautifully produced. It remains to be seen whether playgoers will be so carried away by a clever story as to be blind to its obvious untruth and mechanism, and will forgive the imperfection of the dramatist for the astuteness of the novelist, or whether they will refuse to believe in the story owing to the amateurish construction of the play.

### THREE SHORT PLAYS BY THE STAGE SOCIETY

THE Stage Society has been the means of producing so many interesting and valuable plays that would never otherwise have seen the footlights that we must not deal too unkindly with its latest programme. We are, however, bound to confess that we could see nothing either interesting or valuable in "Pride of Life," by Mr. Ashley Dukes, "The Little Stone House," by Mr. George Calderon, or "The Passing of Talma," by Mr. H. A. Hertz, from the German of Armin Friedmann and Alfred Polgar. We are aware that it is extremely difficult to find one-act plays of excellence which contain intelligent ideas, to say nothing of dramatic effect, but we should have thought that three might have been found which would have done greater credit both to the Society and its actors than those above named. Of them all the one which was certainly least worthy of representation was "The Passing of Talma." Well enough translated and tolerably enough played, it was nothing more than the death scene of a great *ego*-maniac. It lacked action, variety, and impressiveness, and merely presented a picture, very highly coloured, of an old actor during the last hour of his life. This person was an unconscionable time dying, and his abject terror at the approach of death was by no means a pleasant spectacle, nor were his bombastic ravings pleasant to hear. Mr. Henry Ainley, cleverly made-up, lacked the imagination necessary to lift the scene above mere theatricality. He was far too robust and loud, and energetic and commonplace, and never for a moment persuaded us that he felt or believed a word that he was saying. The whole thing was very tiresome and ugly. The other plays do not need any detailed criticism. We trust that the Committee of the Stage Society will be able to provide a better programme for their next venture.

### "SUMURUN" AT THE COLISEUM

WITH outstretched hands, walking like a man under the subtle influence of enchantment, comes Nuz-al-Din. He comes step by step—slowly, dreamily, smilingly, his senses soothed by the fragrance of flowers. So exquisite is the place into which his feet have led him that it seems to him to be dominated by the presence of Allah, the Great Soul which is Beyond all Things. Prone upon his breast he flings himself, and lifts up his voice: "O Friend of All the World, O Friend of the Stars, Mighty King of Kings, Father of the Great Ones and the Poor, I am come, I a son of the Charm, I, a stranger from a great and wonderful land, whose ways and customs are unknown to Thee, as indeed am I, to do reverence to Him that showeth the way. From the Hills to the Sea, from the Sea to the Hills, have I come like one who tip-toes through a dream fearful of waking, to tell Thee my Story. Know then, O Master of my Soul, that my father, of whom the Creator of the Days had need while

yet he was in all his strength, named me, your faithful servant Nuz-al-Din. A merchant of carpets, he dedicated me to walk in his footsteps, which the God of Merchandise had blessed with much prosperity. But I, Nuz-al-Din, was born under other stars than those that gleam upon carpets. As a butterfly is drawn to flowers, I was drawn to all that is beautiful in the wheel of life—to music, to the tender works of Mother Earth, to poetry. And when my father was led by the Beckoning Finger of the Great Seeker upon the everlasting search my soul fell into sadness for that I could not free myself from the tangled threads of multi-coloured wools by which my hands were tied. So thus my trade diminished and fell away, and I, Nuz-al-Din, Merchant of Carpets, turned more than ever from the commerce that I abhorred, and into my mind ran the words of the Poet of All Time, who sang of Life as barren and futile where Love is not. Know, further, O Sovereign, that my shop stood in the Bazaar of that Town which faces the East, and that my neighbour was a showman upon whose back the Wise One, who is above all human criticism, had thrust a Hump. Thus was he pointed at by the ignorant, and made the butt of jeers and ridicule. But to him his Hump meant all. What carpets were to me, so was this Hump to my neighbour.

Opposite to his booth there lived a Slave Dealer, bent beneath the weight of years, and my heart, that had not yet stepped a hair's breadth from the way of obedience, went out to them both—to him that bought and sold those that are Fair and soft, and him that gathered shekels by the display of his play-scenes and his affliction. My long pent-up imagination, ignorant of the Beyond that stretched itself away from the gates of the city, drew a likeness between these two—the Showman and the Slave-dealer to Life and the World. There came a day when into the Bazaar there stepped the beautiful Samurun; she that had caught the fancy of a mighty Prince. Followed by her women, her eyes fall upon me, and it was written that she should find amusement in my boyish sadness. I was bought by her as might she have bought a carpet whose colour and design gave pleasure to the eye. We are all the slaves of Chance, and in this purchase I saw the great gates opening upon the unknown. Know yet further, O King, that it was decreed that I, Nuz-al-Din, should be lifted into sanctity of the House, into the very apartments of the women of the Harem, and that I was carried thither in the basket into which had been placed him of the Hump, my neighbour. For the fuller details of that time, from those quiet hours when I sold carpets in the Bazaar, follow me into the living pictures of my Adventure, seen as in a Dream."

And with this young, wondering, ardent and poetic man you pass, entranced and bewildered. Through a kaleidoscopic series of exquisitely beautiful scenes, going from bazaar to palace, from the street dominated by great buildings all black against the night's cloudless sky to the apartments—a mass of clashing colours—of the harem. You go with him to the strains of delicious music, through the whole gamut of human emotions—curiosity, amazement, fright, despair, excitement, love, hatred, and horror. You meet the painted hunchback, grinning and gesticulating for the amusement of the crowd; his wife, old, gross, gibbering, and hairy; his slave, young, beautiful, and frail; the old Sheikh, greedy and lustful; the elfin-like Sumurun, favourite of the harem; and the thousand and one figures of the "Arabian Nights," all striving to gratify their desire for love or gain, revenge or hatred.

Never before has there been given to London audiences anything so real, vivid, beautiful, imaginative, and uncommon as this dream-play produced by Herr Max Reinhardt and interpreted by the famous company of German actors



from the Deutsches Theater, Berlin, to the music of Herr Victor Hollander. "Sumurun" should attract to the Coliseum all those to whom the simplicity of art makes any appeal, and who wish to become acquainted with acting such as cannot be found on the English stage. From the scenic point of view it is a revelation. The masterly and imaginative stage-management leaves our producers hopelessly in the background. It carries with it a spell and an atmosphere that are utterly new, and a sense of reality that takes the breath away. "Sumurun" must be seen to be appreciated, and seen not once but many times. The Coliseum is to be congratulated on its enterprise.

## MUSIC

THE performance of Bach's "Christmas Oratorio" by the London Symphony Orchestra, under Dr. Richter, with the aid of the Hallé Choir from Manchester, and Mmes. Gleeson White, Marie Stuart, and Messrs. Coates and McInnes was something of a disappointment to one hearer at least. The name of Dr. Richter is above other names. It conjures up for us the splendid memory of many great performances. It would be vain to attempt to reckon up all that he has taught us, or to find adequate expression of the gratitude we feel for the inspiring influence which he has exercised on the course of music in England. His name stands for what is noble and sincere, and altogether worthy in the interpretation of masterpieces. "Authority, thy name is Richter," would be no exaggerated apostrophe from a musician. We feel a kind of guiltiness when we dare to dissent from his ruling, and, as for finding fault with him, we think that surely Apollo Citharædus will send fire from heaven to consume the wight who rashly criticises his peerless servant. Yet must the truth be told. Birmingham knows it and London must guess it; Richter as a conductor of oratorio is not so supreme as Richter the conductor of opera and orchestral concerts. He made his choir obey him, no doubt; it sang correctly and without undue virtuosity. The tone of its soprani was good, but the weakness of the contralti upset the balance of tone, and the men were not more than fair chorus-singers. The singing was too mechanical. What we want for Bach is flexibility of phrasing, and we want to feel, too, that the singers are interpenetrated with a devout enthusiasm. With this Dr. Richter did not seem to have inspired them. It is but just to praise the singing of the chorales by the Hallé choir—this was tender and reverent. But there was too little of it. We would have stayed another hour in Queen's Hall rather than have lost "Break forth, O beauteous heavenly Light" and some of the others. The recitatives were much marred by the uncertainty of the accompanist at the organ and the airs by Dr. Richter's determination that the soloists should enjoy no liberty to broaden out a phrase if they wished. So fine a singer of Bach as Mr. McInnes might have been trusted to indulge in no merely sentimental or *ad captandum* slackenings of time. Discipline is a jewel, but over-rigidity defeats its object. Mr. Coates sang with much cleverness of vocalisation, but was too much inclined to emphasise his effects; Miss Gleeson-White sang always like a musician, but Miss Stuart, both in voice and style, left a good deal to be desired. The orchestra was of course admirable. In the Symphony, that miracle of pastoral sweetness, in such noble music as that of "Glory be to God," and generally in the large and free accompaniments, the players showed themselves masters.

Perhaps it is a mistake to give such a work as the "Christmas Oratorio" in a common concert-hall. It may seem a strange statement to make, but we would rather have the "St. Matthew Passion" in a hall than the "Christmas Oratorio," in spite of the fact that some of the Christmas music was originally written by Bach for secular purposes, and only adapted later for the service of the Church. There is that about the "Passion" music which can carry away the hearer from considerations of environment, but it is not the same with the "Christmas Oratorio." This should be sung, as intended, in church, on the six different evenings of the festival, and if there could be some reproduction of the innocent mediævalism of manger, cradle, angels, &c., so much the better. How differently would our feelings be impressed by the enchanting musical story! In church we should have no conductor and performers bowing their thanks to the same applause that might have been bestowed on a royalty-ballad a few hours before in the same building. An unavailing attempt had been made to check the interruption of hand-clapping. It seems as if the average audience enjoys the audible expression of its feelings as much as the music. In that remarkable book "The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century" Mr. Houston Chamberlain mentions this inability to enjoy solemn music in silence as an instance of the modern separation from the Greek spirit. In one of the capitals of Europe which is specially famed for its educated musical taste, he heard the "St. Matthew Passion"; "every number was followed by applause, and the chorale 'O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden' was actually received with cries of 'Da capo!'" Was this capital London?

Miss Gwynne Kimpton has the interest of the Young Person at heart, and she has organised a series of Orchestral Concerts for the Young at Steinway Hall, at which a careful analysis of the works to be performed is put into the hands of each *backfisch*, and a competent lecturer spends half an hour in making comments and explanations before the music begins. It seems that this plan has been adopted with useful results in Berlin, which is supposed to be a city "specially famed for its educated musical taste." Let us hope that Miss Kimpton will teach her young hearers to listen to oratorios with reverent silence. She herself conducts, and conducts very well, the orchestra, which consists of lady string-players from the Royal Academy, reinforced by professional and masculine performers where required. It can be no easy task to decide what music is best for the innocents to hear. Certainly Miss Kimpton's choice of Mendelssohn's Italian Symphony, the first movement of Beethoven's Pianoforte Concerto in C minor, and Schubert's "Rosamunde" Overture could not be too advanced for young persons who may very likely be playing Debussy at their High Schools. Miss Myrtle Panmure, in the play, would be only too likely to scoff at such simple music, and Miss Kimpton will not find everybody agreeing with her as to the wisdom of training the young idea by means of the "classics." An "advanced" musician of singular acuteness has recently told us that children ought not to be allowed to make the acquaintance of the musical ancients until they have been thoroughly familiarised with the thought and speech of present-day composers. This is the only way, he contends, to ensure the due march of progress, and he further maintains that musicians so educated will be much more competent to estimate aright the real value of bygone music than we are who were tumbled early into a closet of Bach and Handel and Mozart, and have thus the deadly poison of association and sentiment to interfere with our power of forming sane judgments. He looks forward cheerfully to the time when a generation so brought up will revise our present opinion of the "classics" and consign most of them to oblivion. If this view is

ultimately to triumph over the view taken by Miss Kimpton, all we can do is to quote Arnold's lines to the innovators and say, if the musical spirit of man has found new roads, and if indeed we must leave the old faiths and walk therein—

Quench then the altar-fires of your old God,  
Quench not the fire within!

Mr. Plunket Greene goes on with his joyous lectures on Song, for joyous they are to the laughing audience, and packed full of sound sense expressed in language of singular felicity. Last Friday Mr. Greene had much to say about the bad songs and the dunces whose applause makes them possible. His statistics as to the mines of lyric wealth lying unworked by the vocalists while the "royalty" songs multiply like guinea-pigs were saddening. Of Schubert's six hundred songs, how many are we allowed to hear? And in one collection of Irish folk-songs there are at least one thousand eight hundred! While maintaining a scrupulously fair attitude towards the "royalty" system, as regards both publishers and vocalists, he stigmatised it as the chief "something" which keeps the musical taste of England at a low level. He gave an interesting analysis of the various kinds of song, and showed how the programme of a perfect recital should be made up. We could agree with all that he said, except as regards the propriety of singing all the songs in chronological order. This has always seemed to us unnecessary. If it be thought that the simpler songs of an earlier day would sound jejune at the end of a programme, after the rich groups of Brahms and Wolf and the intricacies of Ravel and Debussy, we will agree to no such supposition, and indeed we would rather choose to wend our way from the hall of song into the squalid world of dirt and ugliness that is called London with the strains of an Elizabethan folk-song in our ears than with the perplexing harmonies or discords of a modern "art song." Mr. Greene sang as inimitably as ever in illustration of his arguments. Specially fine was his "Kildrochit Fair," which he droned, first of all, in the style of a Galway peasant, with its curious *agréments*, and then gave it in all its noble simplicity. What a magnificent melody it is! But may we beg Mr. Greene not to be too contemptuous about Tommy Moore. That little gentleman had his weaknesses, no doubt, but we owe him a good deal after all for his championship of Irish song, and certainly he gave Mr. Greene an opportunity in "This Life is All Chequered" of showing his skill of lightning-speed patter, which reminded us of the comment of the American, Mr. Shaler, on the speech of the Tuscan peasant, "whose tongue can whip a cubic inch of air into an amazing lather of sound."

Specimens of well-designed programmes have been given at the Classical Concert Society and the Queen's Hall Symphony Concerts. At these the "classics" were certainly in favour. Mr. Borwick's playing of one of Mozart's sonatas was purely delightful, as was the orchestra's of an early symphony of Mozart (Köchel, No. 201). This, composed at the age of nineteen, was like a flower of spring, like an early-morning poem, like the "Vanneur" of du Bellay. With themes almost childlike in their simple grace, Mozart knew how to construct a piece, elegant, aerial, in the perfect manner. This was followed at Queen's Hall by Beethoven's G major Concerto, which Mr. Emil Sauer played with very fine art, though with cadenzas that were too long. His success with the audience was very great, and he was obliged, after an appeal to Sir Henry Wood's indulgence, to give a solo, Chopin's Nocturne in C sharp minor. Even such an authority on the right succession of programme "numbers" as Mr. Greene could not have chosen better.

## PAUL VERLAINE—II.

IN 1869 Verlaine met Mademoiselle Mathilde Manté, whose candour and youthful innocence at once inflamed his poet's heart. We have it on the unimpeachable evidence of his friend and biographer M. Edmond Lepelletier that up to this time Verlaine had never experienced the joys of any lasting *liaison* with a woman. His pale Mongolian face, with its deep-sunk eyes, presented a picture of extreme ugliness, little calculated to attract the opposite sex. But Verlaine's morose character, his habitude of brooding, and his regrettable preference for absinthe had kept him from seeking *liaisons*, the which were only too frequent in the circle in which he lived. Hitherto, therefore, his love affairs had been mere fancies of the moment, of which he could hardly be proud. Verlaine asked for the hand of Mademoiselle Manté, and his request was accepted by her parents. It was as if a new sun of hope had dawned on the already darkening land of his dreams. He saw the vision of a new and regular life, spent in the arms of innocence, opening out before him. It was this aurora of hope which inspired the beautiful verses of his "Bonne Chanson," addressed to the future guardian of his happiness. Alas! one year of married life sufficed to wreck his dream of happiness, and the "Bonne Chanson" remained, a mocking commentary on the frailty of human hopes. We quote some verses chosen from among the poems of "La Bonne Chanson":—

Puisque l'aube grandit, puisque voici l'aurore,  
Puisque, après m'avoir fui longtemps, l'espoir vent bien  
Revoler devers moi qui l'appelle et l'implore,  
Puisque tout ce bonheur vent bien être le mien.

C'en est fait à présent des funestes pensées,  
C'en est fait des mauvais rêves, ah! c'en est fait,  
Sortant de l'ironie et des lèvres pincées,  
Et des mots où l'esprit sans l'âme triomphait, etc.

And again the lovely song:—

La lune blanche  
Luit dans les bois,  
De chaque branche  
Part une voix  
Sous la ramée;  
O bien aimée.

L'étang reflète,  
Profond miroir,  
La silhouette  
Du saule noire  
Où le vent pleure.  
Rêvons c'est l'heure, etc.

Seldom has a wedding been celebrated to the strains of a more beautiful Epithalamium. Despite the beauty of his wedding-hymn, the poet's love was, perhaps, too sensual in its nature to offer much probability of a lasting union. Also, his Bohemian habits and love of artificial inspiration were too deeply ingrained in his character to make it probable that, the freshest blossoms of wedded life being plucked, he could settle down to the routine of the married state. The marriage was celebrated amid all the inauspicious omens of the 1870 war. As a result of the events of the "Commune" Verlaine left his municipal employment. This reduced his income, and necessitated the migration of the young couple to the home of M. and Madame Manté. The introduction of such a Bohemian as Paul Verlaine into a respectable bourgeois household was productive of fatal dissensions. Within a year of his wedding, owing partly to fear of implication in the trials following on the events of the "Commune," and partly to the intolerable friction of his family life, Verlaine quitted Paris for London, in the company of



his friend the young savage and poet Arthur Rimbaud. He was never destined to see again the woman who had shed a ray of happiness on his life. Shortly after his departure Madame Verlaine applied for a separation on the strength of her husband's alleged unnatural intimacy with Rimbaud.

There can be little doubt that Verlaine was deeply grieved by the separation from his wife, and hoped until the divorce was obtained that a reconciliation might take place. The fruit of his stay in London were his "Romances sans Paroles." These contain some of the finest poems written in this first period of his life before he abandoned the objective for subjective poetry. Even in these poems we note the gradual darkening of the poet's mental horizon, and the increased feeling in his poetry is at once noticeable. Take, for example:—

Il pleure dans mon cœur  
Comme il pleut sur la ville.  
Quelle est cette langueur  
Qui pénètre mon cœur ?" etc.

Or again:—

Le piano que baise une main frêle  
Luit dans le soir rose et gris vaguement,  
Tandis qu'avec un très léger bruit d'aile  
Un air bien vieux, bien faible et bien charmant  
Rôle discret, épeuré quasiment  
Par le boudoir longtemps parfumé d'Elle, etc.

On August 8th, 1873, Paul Verlaine was condemned to two years' imprisonment by the High Court at Brussels as a result of an attempt on the life of his friend and companion Arthur Rimbaud. He bore his imprisonment with calm and resignation until the news of the final separation from his wife was brought to him. Then, in a storm of grief, this scorner of the Christian Faith was driven to grasp the consoling hand of the Church. We are doubtful as to whether his conversion took place with quite the rapidity which he has described. A careful study of his life and works will show that he had been for some time drifting towards a state of religious enthusiasm. It must not be forgotten also that he was deprived of the consoling influence of absinthe, and hence was driven to seek other forms of consolation. His religion was one of emotion and not of conviction. However, this frame of mind was to last for some years, and to it we are indebted for the most beautiful, we may say almost the only, French religious poetry since the Middle Ages. Verlaine, in his collection of poems entitled "Sagesse," has entirely deserted the objective and unemotional verse of his youth, and his poetry becomes subjective and reflects the deepest depths of his poet's soul. We quote some verses to show the strength of his religious emotion:—

Seigneur, c'est trop! Vraiment je n'ose. Aimer qui ?  
Vous ?  
Oh non ! je tremble et n'ose. Oh vous aimer je n'ose,  
Je ne veux pas ! je suis indigne. Vous la rose  
Immense des purs vents de l'amour, ô vous tous, etc.

And again he addresses the Deity in the touching lines:—

Tendez-moi votre main, que je puisse lever  
Cette chair accroupie et cet esprit malade, etc.

Then Verlaine gives us a charming picture of Nature in all her quiet simplicity, as she is seen on any summer day, and to this serene picture he opposes the bitterness of his tears at the thought of his wasted youth:—

Le ciel est par-dessus le toit  
Si bleu, si calme !  
Un arbre, par-dessus le toit,  
Berce sa palme.  
La cloche dans le ciel qu'on voit  
Doucement tinte,  
Un oiseau sur l'arbre qu'on voit  
Chante sa plainte.

Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, la vie est là  
Simple et tranquille,  
Cette paisible rumeur là  
Vient de la ville.  
Qu'as-tu fait, ô toi que voilà  
Pleurant sans cesse ?  
Dis, qu'as-tu fait, toi que voilà  
De ta jeunesse ?

The necessarily short nature of these articles will not permit of a close study of Verlaine's poetry or of long quotations. If we have been fortunate enough to interest any of our readers in the subject, and should they wish to pursue their study further, we recommend the "Choix de Poésies de Paul Verlaine" (Bibliothèque Charpentier). The story of Verlaine's life after his release from the prison at Mons must be told in the sombre language of tragedy. In 1875 he was once more turned adrift in the world. Forsaken by the woman that he still loved, shunned by his friends, and with his moral nature weakened by a life of excesses and a naturally feverish sensibility, there was little chance of peace for him in this world.

Nevertheless his meeting with young Lucien Letinois served to brighten his road for a while, and their friendship inspired his muse with some charming verses. But Lucien Letinois was destined for a premature grave, and, robbed of his friend, Verlaine seems to have abandoned all hope in life, and to have drifted aimlessly towards a dishonoured grave. He lamented his friend in verses copied from Job:—

Mon fils est mort. J'adore, ô mon Dieu, votre loi . . .  
Vous châtiez bien fort. Mon fils est mort, hélas !  
Vous me l'aviez donné, voici que votre droit  
Me le reprend, à l'heure où mes pauvres pieds las  
Réclamaient ce cher guide en cette route étroite.  
Vous me l'aviez donné, vous me le reprenez :  
Gloire à vous ! . . .

His "Sagesse," to which we have already alluded, and which contained perhaps his finest poems, was published in 1881. From this date onward Verlaine wrote little good poetry; his addiction to drink incapacitated him for serious work. True, he published three collections of poems—"Amour," "Jadis et Naguère," and "Parallèlement," but most of the poems contained in these were written before the emotional poetry of "Sagesse," and collected for publication when Verlaine began to feel the press of poverty. We may quote one peculiarly beautiful poem from his "Amour":—

Je vois un groupe sur la mer.—  
Quelle mer ? Celle de mes larmes.  
Mes yeux mouillés du vent amer,  
Dans cette nuit d'ombre et d'alarmes,  
Sont deux étoiles sur la mer.  
C'est une toute jeune femme  
Et son enfant déjà tout grand  
Dans une barque où nul ne rame,  
Sans mât ni voile, en plein courant  
Un jeune garçon, une femme !  
En plein courant dans l'ouragan !  
L'enfant se cramponne à sa mère  
Qui ne sait plus où, non plus qu'en  
Ni plus rien, et qui, folle, espère  
En le courant, en l'ouragan.  
Espérez en Dieu, pauvre folle,  
Crois en notre père, petit.  
La tempête qui vous désole,  
Mon cœur de là-haut vous prédit  
Qu'elle va cesser, petit, folle.  
Et paix au groupe sur la mer,  
Sur cette mer de bonnes larmes  
Mes yeux joyeux dans le ciel clair  
Par cette nuit sans plus d'alarmes  
Sont deux bons anges sur la mer

From 1883 Verlaine's life was spent between the "Hôtels garnis" of the Quartier Latin and the wards of public hospitals. His excesses had brought on chronic rheumatism. During the time spent out of the hospitals the unfortunate poet passed his hours in drinking, or in the arms of unworthy mistresses who haunted his lodging and generally left him about the same time as his last franc. Fortune made a final concession to the poet's pride, and when his last illness overtook him he was in possession of a small sum of money, and was thus spared the dishonour of a death in a public hospital.

On January 8th, 1896, he died, tended by Eugénie Kranz, the companion of his last years. It is in keeping with the rest of the tragedy of his life that this woman, who was quite incapable of appreciating his poetic genius and who was only attracted by the presence of a few louis in his purse, should have been the sole witness of his last agony.

Such is the story of Paul Verlaine, poet and vagabond, who amid the sordidness of his life found time to write some of the most musical, most acutely sensitive, and certainly the finest emotional religious poetry that has ever been penned.

S. A.-B.

## THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY

### IV.—THE STORY-TELLER

HE changed with the seasons, and, like the seasons, was welcome in every mood. In spring he was forlorn and passionate in turn; now fiercely eloquent, now tuneful with these little cheerful songs that seem in terms of human emotion to be the saddest of all. In summer he dreamed in sensuous and unambitious idleness, gladly conscious of the sunshine and warm winds and flower-smells, and using only languorous and gentle words. In autumn, with the dead leaves of the world about his feet, he became strangely hopeful and generous of glad promises of adventure and conquest. It seemed as though he found it easier to triumph when Nature had abdicated her jealous throne. But it was in the winter-time when he came into his own kingdom, and mastered his environment and his passions to make the most joyful songs. Then he would lie at full length on the hearthrug, and we children, sitting in a rapt circle, fantastically lit by the fire, would listen to his stories, and know that they were the authentic wisdom.

It was in vain that the grown-ups warned us against the fascinations of his society, telling us that dreamers came to no good end in a practical world. As well might the town-folk of Hamelin, in Brunswick, have ordered their children to turn a deaf ear to the tune of the Pied Piper. We had studied life from a practical point of view between our games, and found it unsatisfying; this man brought us something infinitely more desirable. He would come stepping with delicate feet, fearful of trampling on our own tender dreams, and he would tell us the enchanted stories that we had not heard since we were born. He told us the meaning of the stars and the significance of the sun and moon; and, listening to him, we remembered that we had known it all once before in another place. Sometimes even we would remind him of some trivial incident that he had forgotten, and then he would look at us oddly and murmur sadly that he was getting very old. When the stories were over, and all the room was still ringing with beautiful echoes, he would stand erect and ask us fiercely whether we saw any straws in his hair. We would climb up him to look (for he was very tall), and when we told him that we could not find any he would say: "The day you see them there will be no

more stories." We knew what the stories were worth to us, so we were always afraid of looking at his head for fear that we should see the straws and all our gladderest hours should be finished.

His voice was all the music extant, and it was only by recalling it that our young ears could find that there was beauty in fine singing and melodiousness in the chaunt of birds. Yet when his words were eloquent we forgot the voice and the speaker, content to sacrifice our critical individualities to his inspiration till we were no more than dim and silent figures in the background of his tale. It was only in winter-time that he achieved this supreme illusion; perhaps the firelight helped him, and the chill shadows of the world. In the summer his stories had the witchery of dreams; their realism startled us, and yet we knew that they were not real. After listening to them through a hot afternoon we would stretch back into consciousness, as though we had been asleep; his drowsy fancies lulled our personalities, but did not conquer them. The winter magic was of a rarer kind. Then even his silences became significant, for he brought us to so close an intimacy with his mind that his very thoughts seemed like words.

It is idle to expect a child to believe that every grown-up person was a child once upon a time, for it is not credible that they could have forgotten so much. But this man was a child both in feeling and in understanding. He knew the incidents that perplexed us in those nursery legends that have become classics, and sometimes it was his pleasure to tell them to us again, having regard to our wakeful sympathies. He was the friend of all the poor lost creatures of romance—the giants whose humiliating lot it was to be defeated by any stripling lad, the dragons whose flaming strength was a derision when opposed to virtue in armour. He shared our pity for Antaeus and Caliban and Goliath of Gath, and even treated sorcerers and wicked kings with reasonable humanity. Somehow, though we felt that it was wicked, we could not help being sorry for people when they were punished very severely. The very ease with which giants could be outwitted suggested that the great simple fellows might prove amiable enough if they were kindly treated, while it was always possible that dragons might turn out to be bewitched princes, if only the beautiful princesses would kiss them instead of sending heroes to kill them unfairly, without giving them an opportunity of explaining their motives. Our story-teller understood our scruples and sympathised with them, and in his versions every one had a chance, whether they were heroes or no. Even the best children are sometimes cruel, but they are never half so pitiless as the writers of fairy-stories.

But better than any fairy-stories were the stories that he told us of our own lives, which under his touch became the wonderful adventures which they really were. He showed us that it was marvellous to get out of bed in the morning, and marvellous to get into bed at night. He made us realise the imaginative value of common things, and the fun that could be derived even from the performance of duties, by aid of a little make-believe. The grown-up folk would probably have derided his system, but he made us tolerate our lessons, and endure the pangs of tooth-ache with some degree of fortitude. He had a short way with the ugly bogles with which thoughtless nurses and chance echoes from the horrors columns of newspapers had peopled the shadows of our life. We were no longer afraid of the dark when he had told us how friendly it could be to the distressed. Hitherto we had vainly sought to find the colours and sounds of romance in life, and, failing, had been tempted to sum up the whole business as tedious. After he had shown us how to do it, it was easy to see that life itself was a story as romantic as we cared to make it. Our daily



official walks became gallant expeditions, and we approached arithmetic with a flaming sword.

Can any childhood ever have known a greater wizard than this? And yet since that state does not endure for ever, it must surely have happened to us to seek for straws in his towering head once too often, had not death taken our kindly enchanter from our company, and thus spared us the bitter discovery that the one man who reconciled us to life was considered rather more than eccentric by an obtuse world. It is true that we noticed that the grown-up people were apt to treat him sometimes as if he were one of us, but we felt that he merited this distinction, and did not find it strange. Nor did we wonder that he should tell stories aloud to himself lacking a wider audience, for we knew that if we had the power we should tell such stories to ourselves all day long. We did not only fail to realise that he was mad; we knew that he was the only reasonable creature of adult years who ever came near us. He understood us and paid us the supreme compliment of allowing us to understand him. The world called him fantastic for actions that convinced us that he was wise, and, thanks to a fate that seemed at the time insensately cruel, the spell was never broken.

RICHARD MIDDLETON.

## INDIA: A SERIES

### IV.—HIGH POLITICS, EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL—1876-1884

LYTTON

WHEN Lord Northbrook left India in 1876 the country was apparently in the enjoyment of peace, within and without. His successor, Lord Lytton, of the Diplomatic Service, took out full instructions from the Conservative Government in England to enter upon friendly relations with Afghanistan, with the object, stated briefly, of counteracting Russian influence in that country and the approach of Russia towards India. A free hand was left to Lord Lytton as to the time and manner of carrying out these instructions. His proposal to send an Envoy to Kabul to discuss matters of common interest to the two Governments was not accepted by the Amir, Sher Ali. A Conference, however, took place at Peshawar in January-February, 1877, between a Kabul Envoy and the British representative, but the former died and the Conference was fruitless. The Amir had committed himself to an alliance with Russia. While the relations with the Amir were strained, Indian troops were despatched to Malta in 1878. Russia retaliated by giving trouble to India through Afghanistan. When the Amir had received a Russian mission under Stoletoff, and declined to admit the English mission under Sir Neville Chamberlain in September, 1878, war with Afghanistan was the consequence. The main events of this war, leading up to the treaty of Gundamak in May, 1879, the murder of Cavagnari in the following September, and the subsequent occupation of Kabul are matters of history. In carrying out his instructions Lord Lytton had to contend with unforeseen situations, and the whole policy formed the subject of party controversy in England. The assumption by her Majesty Queen Victoria of the title "Empress of India" necessitated its proclamation by the Viceroy at the Imperial Assemblage at Delhi on January 1st, 1877. The rains of 1876 having failed badly in parts of India, Bombay, Madras, and Mysore were visited by severe famine in 1877, and Lord Lytton found it necessary to proceed personally to the Provinces affected in August-September; but, through inefficient local management in certain parts, there were considerable mortality and

unnecessary expenditure. After the famine a Commission was appointed to record the experience of past famines and frame a system, which was subsequently formulated in Famine Codes, for future famine relief. A policy of insurance against famine was also inaugurated by providing an annual surplus of a specified sum for famine relief, or for the discharge or prevention of debt. This scheme was afterwards modified to allow of expenditure on railways and canals required for protection of districts liable to scarcity. In 1878 the Vernacular Press Act was passed to deal with seditious publications, the growth of which in India had become evident; the need of action had been strongly represented from Bengal. The Act was restricted to publications in Oriental languages; its object was preventive rather than punitive, and it authorised the taking of bonds from publishers and printers. Measures were adopted for the further decentralisation of the finances; the salt-tax was equalised throughout India. The Inland Customs Line, which still stretched across India for 1,500 miles, was abolished. Cesses for public works were imposed on the land, and a licence-tax was levied on traders. In pursuit of Free Trade the import duties on cotton goods were repealed partly in 1878, and more in 1879, leaving only the finer kinds taxable, and the House of Commons resolved on their total abolition. Other important matters engaged the attention of Government. An Army Commission sat in 1879 and fully considered every military question. A Press Commissioner was appointed to be the medium of communication between Government and the Press, and to report on the Vernacular Press. A measure was adopted for the admission of more natives of India to appointments hitherto reserved for the Indian Civil Service. The Frontiers were not neglected. A British Agency was established at Gilgit. The Jowaki Afridis and other tribes were punished for a series of outrages against British territory. Lord Lytton advocated the formation of a new Frontier Province beyond the Indus, a policy which was carried out by Lord Curzon. All these events and measures which occupied Lord Lytton rendered his Viceroyalty notable for its political excitement. The ability displayed in his public utterances, speeches, and writings has always been acknowledged, even by his opponents.

### LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT: PHILO-INDIAN POLICY

RIPON

The Liberal Government in England were determined that peace with Afghanistan should be restored, and Lord Ripon was instructed to secure it. Abdurrahman, nephew of Sher Ali, was made Amir of Kabul on certain conditions. His cousin, Ayub Khan, defeated a British force at Maiwand on July 27th, but was himself defeated by Lord Roberts at Kandahar on September 1st. The Cabinet objected in the strongest terms to anything that could involve the permanent retention of a British force at Kandahar, from which accordingly, as well as from other parts of Afghanistan, all British troops were withdrawn in 1881. Before Lord Lytton left India in July, 1880, it was known that the Estimates of the cost of the Afghan War were erroneous, but the magnitude of the miscalculations appeared later. In preparing the Estimates, the Accountant-General of the Military Department had made no attempt to ascertain the actual expenditure on the war; he had only taken cognisance of the classified and duly audited accounts, ignoring the actual issues from the Civil treasuries on military drawings. The deficits proved to be considerable, but the English Treasury contributed five millions to the cost of the war, and the finances generally had been so well administered that financial prosperity was soon regained; and in 1882-83 large reductions in taxation were effected; import duties,

including those on cotton goods, were extensively abolished, the salt-tax was reduced, the native army was reorganised, regiments being disbanded and the men re-employed in other regiments. Stock Notes were issued to attract capital, but the system failed in its object; the Subordinate Civil Service also was reorganised.

In 1882 Lord Ripon showed his Liberal tendencies by inaugurating the policy of Local Self-Government, which was intended to open up the path of self-government by the people themselves. The aim was to establish a network of local corporations, the members thereof to be elected, with non-official Chairmen, the officials to be charged with duties of supervision rather than of initiation and direction. After inquiry, Local Self-Government was nominally established throughout the country, through Local Boards and Municipalities with increased powers. The elective principle was widely extended: the new institutions were entrusted with greater power over local funds. Though immediate official supervision was diminished, still, in view of their eventual responsibility, some power of interference was reserved to Government and local official authorities. Lord Ripon anticipated that in the beginning there would be some faulty administration. Local Self-Government has not proved a complete success, and the responsibility of the officials remains practically unaltered.

An Education Commission was appointed in 1882 to inquire into the effect given to the Education despatch of 1854, the grant-in-aid system, inspection and payment by results, and other branches of public instruction. When the report was published it failed to produce results commensurate with the labour of the inquiry. In 1883 a project of law was framed in order to confer upon certain classes of native officers criminal jurisdiction over European British subjects. The Europeans, especially the non-officials, bitterly opposed the project, and much ill-feeling was aroused. Eventually a compromise was effected, and this jurisdiction was conferred on a more limited number of native officers, and the right to a European jury was secured to all accused Europeans. The controversy created such a storm that racial amalgamation was perceptibly retarded for years. The Vernacular Press Act was repealed under orders from England. The Agricultural Department and the Public Works Member of Council were revived. An International Exhibition was held at Calcutta in 1883-4. A Factory Act was passed and applied to regulate the employment of children. Mysore was, according to promise, restored to the Maharaja. With the development of Indian railways and the opening of docks, exports of produce largely increased. Indian stores were substituted for English wherever possible. Generally, Lord Ripon favoured a policy of advancing the natives in every way, which caused some resentment. On his retirement in 1884 there was an outburst of strong personal sentiment, the public opinion of the native population having been moved in his favour beyond all precedent.

### A MATTER OF BLUFF

"WORDS, words, words," sighs Hamlet, in mockery of a very old diplomatist. But this was not to say that his creator knew not the virtue and value of words. For words are mystic emblems of much meaning, potent to unlock many secrets, or to advance their users, so they be deft and cunning, to places of high function. Shakespeare well knew that words are never empty. Assuredly Parolles did. It was the prime discovery of his life which he did not intend to let slip by without use and advantage.

He knew well how brave a show words can make in the gestures of life, and he armed himself with them in their

most valiant vesture. Somewhere he had discovered, if his original spirit of chicanery had not already divined it for him, that the difference in the value of their meanings and in the value of the facts they implied was one that could be covered by a juggle of the hand; that symbols could be used for realities with magnificent success with Life's novitiates. He knew, for example, that, did he but "make tolerable vent of his travel, it might pass." He knew it, and he played to it. He trod boldly forward, and the ready credence of others supported him through the part he had to play.

Nor did he play his part with any stint. An incorrigible coward in all else, he was no coward where appearances were concerned. His boasts flew to heaven; he shouldered the most impossible undertakings, never intending to fulfil them. He dressed his part, too, with superb abandon: in the boldness of saffron, and with scarfs and bannerets streaming about him. Moreover, he was not unaware of the excellent value of circumstantial knowledge and deft reference. Even his enemies have to admit that "he hath a smack of all neighbouring languages"—German, Danish, low Dutch, French, and Italian—in the graceful use of which it may safely be assumed he was not remiss. And when certain soldiers are off to the wars he does not fail to polish the opportunity to his advantage. "Noble heroes," says he, "my sword and yours are kin. You shall find in the regiment of the Spinii one Captain Spurio, with his cicatrice, an emblem of war, here on his sinister cheek; it was this very sword entrenched it; say to him, I live, and observe his report for me." Detection is impossible, that he knows well; and thus by the expenditure of a very few words he has added a substantial lustre to his glory. Which is at worst a feat of some skill, and at best a considerable achievement in artistry.

With the title of Captain Parolles he comes to Bertram, and is accepted by him at his own estimate as a "gallant militarist." Bertram, as the play only too well proves him, was something of an unlovable coxcomb; but there is this, at least, to say for him—that it was but little unlikely any one would proclaim himself as a "gallant militarist" in the presence of soldiers without being well assured of what he said. It seemed impossible to him that a man should claim so much without the shadow of a title to support it, leaving the wit of the occasion to resolve the rest. But Bertram was young; moreover, he was a coxcomb—which unhappy, yet too frequent combination of attributes makes him the natural prey of such as Monsieur Parolles masquerading in office of a captain.

It all seemed so fitting and proper. "That jackanapes with scarfs" Diana calls him as he passes her in the streets, making much ostentation of melancholy over the loss of some or other drum in a scuffle. Yet this very abandon seemed to Bertram only the natural swagger of the camps. He will not believe so emphatic a show to be but a mere counterfeit of worth. One of his friends says to him: "If your lordship finds him not a hilding, hold me no more in your respect." "On my life, a bubble!" says another. But he is only mystified. He can but reply: "Do you think I am so far deceived in him?" He cannot credit it that there can be so goodly a show with nothing to substantiate it.

He was young, and in love with shows. But even as youth is the natural prey of words so age is their natural exposer. Thus it was but fitting that he who should first have discovered Parolles should be astute old Lafeu. He has taunted Parolles, seeking to test his worth, and Parolles has bid him know, haughtily enough, that his language is one "not to be understood without bloody succeeding." Seeing, however, that Lafeu is not one that fears a contest—



hails it, rather!—he tells him that he is too old to fight. "You are too old, Sir; let it satisfy you, you are too old." He will brush him aside; he will fend discovery; but Lafeu has found his man. "I did think thee," says he, "for two ordinaries, to be a pretty wise fellow. Yet the scarfs and bannerets about thee did manifoldly dissuade me from believing thee a vessel of too great a burden. I have now found thee." And again: "You are a vagabond, and no true traveller; you are more saucy with lords and honourable personages than the heraldry of your birth and virtue gives you commission." The natural because boastful exaggerations of truth he is not averse from; they are one thing; "a good traveller is something at the latter end of a meal; but one that lies three-thirds, and uses a known truth to pass a thousand nothings with, should once be heard and thrice beaten—God save you, captain!"

Lafeu has discovered him, and his knowledge passes to the others. But Bertram resists discovery. He will yet cling to his faith in his "gallant militarist;" he will not admit him to be an egregious fraud, for that would be an admission of his own deficiency of wisdom. But he will permit a trial of his quality. So far he will go.

There has been this drum lost, over which, knowing it irrecoverable, Parolles has given vent to much chagrin, as though to his keen military sense so small a loss was a grievous dishonour. They urge him to its recovery. "It is to be recovered," says he; "but that the merit of service is seldom attributed to the true and exact performer, I would have that drum or another, or *hic jacet*." Bertram urges him, if he has "a stomach to't," to be "magnanimous in the enterprise," promising him the whole credit of the exploit, "even to the utmost syllable of your worthiness." "I'll about it this evening," says he; and therewith the very spirit of humour is toward.

The exploit is impossible of achievement; but this does not daunt Parolles. Even though it were possible he would yet have no intention of endeavouring it, for it could not be dangerous, and he has no stomach for danger. But what of that? Words will extract him. Sufficient to the occasion is its own wit. Nevertheless he is surprised at himself. "What the devil," asks he of himself, "should move me to undertake the recovery of the drum, being not ignorant of its impossibility, and knowing I had no such purpose? I must give myself some hurts, and say I got them in exploit." "I would I had any drum of the enemy's," he adds, however.

But he may not escape so easily this time, for there is a plot out for his exposure. Even as he roams the night in perplexity outside the enemy's lines, thus to fill up the necessary time to give his story point, Bertram's friends are on him with the cry of "Thoca movousus, cargo, cargo, cargo." Not understanding this wild and unseemly language, he imagines forthwith that he has fallen into the hands of the Muscovite hirelings, and is terrified at the thought. He calls out that he will give them any information if only his life be spared. A soldier comes forward to serve as interpreter, and he is haled off, blindfold, before Bertram to be served through an interrogatory as to Bertram's private character, the character of his friends, the disposition of his troops, and what else they may seek to ask him for their sport.

Who shall paint the humour of it? Bertram hears himself described as "a foolish, idle boy," "very ruttish," "a dangerous and lascivious boy," "a whale to virginity." He learns that his friends are defined as idle, worthless, and "swinedrunk." He hears his "manifold linguist and armipotent soldier" tell him, thinking him an enemy, how worthless his forces are and where they might fitly be attacked. No exposure could be more complete. He becomes indeed no more than a bubble. But when he is

unbandaged and learns his exposure, seen for a "snipt-taffeta fellow," is he abashed? Is he nonplussed? No, not he! He philosophises:—

Yet am I thankful; if my heart were great,  
'Twould burst at this. Captain, I'll be no more;  
But I will eat and drink, and sleep as soft  
As captain shall.

DARRELL FIGGIS.

## REVIEWS AND MAGAZINES

THE distinguishing feature of the magazines this month must needs be Lord Morley's article in the *Nineteenth Century* on "British Democracy and Indian Government." It is not too much to say that the problem of Indian Government, in all its history, before and since the days of the East India Company, never fell into more earnest, honest, thought-directed hands than Lord Morley's. Now he has won to his rest in the dignified sinecure of Lord President of the Council, it is good to see him let his thinking on the subject travel from the problems of actual administration to the enlightenment of the general. It is perhaps needless to say that the subject that has pricked him into speech is Valentine Chirol's book on "Indian Unrest," which has already been reviewed in these columns. But being so incited, his thought has embraced wider problems than are covered by that book—or rather, his thought has covered the same problems with wider outlook. His article deals with the subject in three main divisions—the relationship between the India Secretary at Westminster and the Viceroy at Simla or Calcutta; the relationship between the English electorate and its Indian Secretary; and the relationship between the English people and the peoples of India. It is of course impossible to deal fully with so comprehensive and thoughtful an article in the qualified space of this review. The following sentences, however, will give the spirit in which it is written, being no less than the spirit in which the writer achieved the duties of Indian Secretary. "Undoubtedly," he says, "the cheerful stoic's heart is a regal help to the responsible ruler. *Sueva indignatio* has its own due hour, but hope is the better vein; it is nearer the working daylight." In the same magazine Sir Robert Anderson has an article on "The Problem of the Criminal Alien." He is unfortunate in his manner. He puts forward suggestions that may be excellent enough in a manner sufficiently harsh to deter those who are most willing to agree with him. Dr. Hyslop writes on "Post-Illusionism and Art in the Insane." Apart from the fact that it lacks the virtue of accompanying illustration and example, it is an article that more than repays attention.

In the *Fortnightly* Mr. Garvin spreads himself "From Reval to Potsdam." Mr. Garvin is a strange man—what one might call an awkward man to have on one's side. But there is no doubt that he is very much in earnest in his Germanophobia. Unfortunately he neglects the one or two unanswerable arguments in favour of a controversial display. Mr. Swift MacNeill's constitutional lore is proverbial. Therefore when he deals with "Foreign Policy and Parliamentary Control" he commands attention. The sum of his argument is this: that at the last Election the single issue before the electorate was whether or not "the will as expressed by its representatives should, subject to certain safeguards to secure that the country had made up its mind, prevail." But, obviously, the people (whosoever and whatsoever that be) have no part or lot in two matters that most vitally concern its destiny—foreign policies and treaties, to wit—

the latter of which are deliberately never signed while Parliament is sitting. Mr. MacNeill desires, and he quotes the late Mr. Bagehot in his favour, that all treaties should require ratification by the House of Commons. It is a matter that is bound to attract attention in the near future. In the *Fortnightly* also Mr. McKenna sends a prophet before his face to discuss the Naval Estimates in Mr. Archibald Hurd. He informs us frankly that they are to be between forty-four and forty-five millions, and then examines and discusses them in detail, defending them with skill. This sort of thing has hitherto been done in the House of Commons, but one lives to learn the increasing subtlety of the bureaucracy. The famous Declaration of London (which is destined to become yet more famous, especially after the next Colonial Conference) is examined closely by Lieutenant Monsel. We will not forestall subsequent discussion by elaboration now, but at the moment will only draw attention to the article. One of the most striking articles in this magazine is Mr. William Archer's account of the "Portuguese Republic." Another is Zinaida Vengerova's account of "Tolstoy's Last Days." The churlish attempt in some quarters to minimise Tolstoy's greatness meets its sufficient refutation here.

It is pleasant, in the *English Review*, to discover Arthur Symons' name heading its contents with a poem entitled "A Refrain," which is not so good as some we know of his, but which has this distinguishing feature in modern verse, that it utters its own authoritative note, and does not struggle to utter. The other two poems, by Margaret L. Woods and W. R. Titterton, are good so far as they go, but they miss the voice of authority. Mr. Frank Harris has an interesting article on "Talks with Carlyle," some of which is a little difficult to reconcile with internal probability. The article that must needs seem the chief feature, however, is that on "My Ideal John Bullesses," by Yoshio Markino. The illustrations are not so extraordinarily characteristic, and certainly their reproduction is disappointing. But the text of the article is charming. Its English is, happily, unedited, and consequently in the very lack of grammar we can hear the accents of the writer. It is a bold experiment, and altogether a successful one. Mr. Filson Young deals with "The Place of Music in Modern Life," but only succeeds in touching the fringe of a deeply interesting subject. Mrs. H. G. Wells has an extraordinary sketch entitled "Fear," while Mr. Harrison himself deals with the library censorship and its late fatuous exhibition in the banning of Neil Lyons' "Cottage Pie." There is only one fault in this article, and that is that it attempts to reason with those that are beyond the pale of reason. A body that includes Elinor Glyn and bans one who bids fair to be the first of living humorists, is not a subject for reasonable treatment, but for explosive merriment or utter contempt.

The *Edinburgh Review* is still a stout adherent to unsigned articles. But one would like to know who is responsible for the article on English Prosody. It is an ostensible review of Professor Saintsbury's three volumes on that subject; but it is also an admirable corrective to that work, and should be read alongside it. Those who have read the work will remember Professor Saintsbury's lavish praise of Swinburne, and particularly of the "When the Hounds of Spring" chorus of "Atalanta in Calydon." While admitting the full value and sonorous music of that famous chorus, we cannot but agree with the *Edinburgh Review* writer when he says, "It is almost certain that of any one who has really been 'captured' by this literature the ear would no longer rightly respond to the delicacies of great blank verse, whether of the dramatists or of Milton, nor to the best of our lyric." Other excellent articles are on "Mary Stuart," "Our Tudor Kings," and "The Principles

of Heredity." The *International Journal of Ethics* is another quarterly, and is chiefly remarkable in its present number for an excellent exposition by Professor Lovejoy of "William James as Philosopher." The best thing in *Blackwood's* is Mr. Farman on "Aviation in 1910;" while *Harper's* has an illuminative article on "General Lee as I Knew Him," by Major Ranson.

The current number of the *Church Quarterly* maintains its usual high standard of articles and reviews written especially for the ecclesiastical scholar. Of these perhaps the best is that on "The Policraticus of John of Salisbury," written by Mr. Clement Webb, of Magdalen College. The learned editor, Dr. Headlam, has a valuable article on Dr. Rendel Harris's publication from the Syriac version of "The Odes and Psalms of Solomon," in which he alludes to the curious "discovery" of the MS. by Dr. Harris on the shelves of his own library! The explanation is that it was one of a bundle of "late paper manuscripts in the Syriac language which came from the neighbourhood of the Tigris." Lady Laura Ridding contributes a temperate and convincing paper against divorce, based on a consideration of some aspects presented in certain novels, notably Mrs. Humphry Ward's "Daphne" and Mr. Winston Churchill's "Modern Chronicle." We anticipated some interest from the title of another article, "Democracy in English Fiction," but found much disappointment in its weak and rather limited literary criticism. The amazing fact that there is no reference to the masterpieces of Thomas Hardy can only be explained on the supposition of the narrow but well-known clerical bias which exists towards that great writer on humanistic democracy.

The *Dublin Review* opens with a clever article on Mr. William Monypenny's first volume of the life of Lord Beaconsfield, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a "Christian by adoption" only for political reasons, "a card of admission to public life," and in Bismarck's opinion, when he said "Ach, der alte Jüd," "the ablest man at the Berlin Congress."

"The Decay of Fixed Ideals" is a striking estimate of that modern trend of thought, which, while tacitly rejecting Christianity, is still impelled by its momentum. Friedrich Foerster, on the other hand, whose books Mr. Meyrick Booth examines, is the leader in effect of a strong reactionary movement in Germany against materialism. There is an interesting article by Mr. F. McCullagh on the extreme anti-clerical nature of the Portuguese revolution on the part of the leaders. But he says that M. Poincard, who in "Le Portugal Inconnu" gives a sociological study of the causes which have led to Portugal's decay, "makes no reference whatever either to the Church or to the Braganzas." An estimate of Elgar will delight musical readers, except perhaps the official leaders of English music, who are treated in a vein of whimsical irony. Queen Elizabeth from the View of the Spanish State Papers will interest students of the Reformation period.

## THE LONDON INSTITUTION

"THE Art of Palæolithic Man" was the subject of the lecture given by Dr. Alfred C. Haddon, M.A., Sc.D., F.R.S., at the London Institution on Monday last. Before developing his theme, the lecturer outlined the periods of the Palæolithic Age, described the animals which appeared at various times, and the implements, finished in many ways, characteristic of the different phases of this extremely early art. Notions of design, he proceeded to explain, were very simple among savage peoples. Rude sculpture in the round preceded the rough, coarse engravings on bone, ivory, and



steatite—although these efforts were not child's play, but represented the work of serious artists who studied carefully the outlines of the limbs and the human form. Slides were shown on the screen illustrating this, also many of the curious carvings discovered in the Grotte du Mas d'Azil, in the South of France, the Caverne des Espéluques-Lourdes, and the paintings from the Altamira Cave, in the North of Spain. The problem as to why these attempts to depict natural objects were made was a difficult one, since the most insignificant and apparently inexplicable marks must have meant something; some, perhaps, were achieved merely for pleasure; others, it is supposed, have a magical significance, and were intended as charms to ensure success in hunting, &c.

Dr. Haddon then discussed the degeneration of the primitive designs by the process of copying another man's work—the copy of a copy ended by bearing scarcely any resemblance to the original. Examples of the earliest known brush-work were shown, and it was notable that exactly as some modern artists hoped by copious employment of colour to mask bad drawing, so in Palæolithic Art there occurred a lamentable phase of falling-off, in which the drawing became wretched as the colour-scheme progressed. Engraving was often combined with colour to give precision to the detail, and it must be remembered, observed the lecturer, that nearly all these primitive pictures must have been drawn and painted practically in the dark of the caves or by the faint illumination of a little clay lamp. Views of many chased implements, such as spears and harpoons, were shown; also certain engraved bones, supposed by the French archaeologists to be ceremonial staves, but which by English authorities were considered to be spears. Dr. Haddon concluded very aptly by quoting a stanza or two from Kipling's "Story of Ung."

## IN THE TEMPLE OF MAMMON

The City Editor will be pleased to answer all financial queries by return of post if correspondents enclose a stamped, addressed envelope. Such queries must be sent to the City Offices, 15, Copthall Avenue, E.C.

Most of the stockbrokers are grumbling. They cannot persuade the public to gamble, and investment business is dull. There is a definite demand for really sound securities, but no one appears anxious either to buy or to subscribe for speculative stocks. For example, the amusing "Lake of Soda" Company landed its underwriters with 85 per cent. The issues of the past week have not been interesting. It seems extraordinary that underwriters can be found to take risks in such hazardous ventures as, for instance, the Oil Trust issue for the purpose of exploiting asphalt. "Profit-sharing Bonds" of the nominal value of two shillings is mere bucket-shop finance. Cuba is a rich island; it is liked by the British investor, who has sunk twenty millions in Cuban companies, but if we get many concerns like the Havana Exploration the hardy speculator will sniff when he hears the name of Cuba. An ingenious financier of the name of North, desirous of selling shares in an African Rubber Company that has planted Manihot, advertises that he will deposit cash with trustees to pay dividend for one year on all shares sold through the advertisement. He does not risk much. It is a quaint way of selling shares at a discount.

Money appears certain to become cheap. We now hear very little about that overpowering stringency that was to overwhelm us. India seems satisfied for the moment; New York does not require funds; the Argentine is likely to get through the harvest without calling upon us for any large amount. Brazil may obtain more gold if the speculative element can engineer a corner in rubber, but this is far from

being the certainty so many people declare it to be. Egypt has exported about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  million cantars of cotton, and has  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million left in Alexandria; thus she cannot release all the gold she has in hand. The Banks are pressing the speculators to realise, and the position is becoming dangerous, but not of importance.

CONSOLS seem to me an excellent purchase, for Lloyd George can lose nothing by popularising the national security, and he might do much good. A Government paper declares that he has his scheme ready. Consols in £5 bonds to bearer, with coupons attached, and purchasable at any post-office at the market price of the day, would be an admirable lock-up for poor people. There is no reason why Irish Land Stock should not be sold in the same way. Indeed, all securities issued by the Treasury should be obtainable at our post-offices at market prices. The Post Office might charge a small commission to recoup itself for the expense.

FOREIGNERS look dull, and it is evident that we may get a still further reaction in Russians; this may last through the week, when it will be safe to buy again. The Socialists in Paris, always ready to skirmish along the flanks of the army of great financiers, are propounding questions relative to the Russian Loan about which I wrote. The agitation will come to nought, but it has scared a few bulls, and the price has drooped.

HOME RAILS gave us two surprises last week. One, the Midland dividend, which was magnificently generous, and the other the sale of the Tilbury line. Tilbury shares are still cheap. The Midland have made a good bargain, for the little line is profitable, and upon last year's net profits would give the Midland £5,000 a year after paying the preference dividend. The deal will go through, and Tilbury stock is certainly worth £150. The secret was well kept, but a few clever people bought some time back, and have taken their profits. There is not likely to be any boom in Home Rails, but we may expect a steady advance all through the year. The buying of Scotch stock still continues, but I am told that a bull account exists; therefore, those who have made a profit must now watch the market carefully; a reaction might come.

YANKEES appear just ready for a slight fall. Norfolks did not increase the dividend, and the wise people in New York think that the price of the shares is too high. There has been some silly talk about Unions, and an attack has been made on the stock. The story went round that in an old balance-sheet huge blocks of assets had been duplicated. The Union accounts are not clear, and never were; but the tale had no sense in it. Unions are the cheapest of all the 10 per cent. Railway stocks. The Canadian Reciprocity Treaty caused a great rise in Hill stocks, but speculators were hardly wise, for much water will flow down the Hudson before the two nations come to terms. The speculative position in the States is not big, but it grows, and bankers may think a shake out necessary; therefore I should take a profit and get in again after the fall had run a few days. The main tendency will be upwards. Steels are bad on figures, but good on inside information, which tells of large orders placed or ready to be placed. Gary says that the Conference will not take place, which means that he is strong enough to support the market and disregard those outside the Trust. These outside firms are working full time, and must be making money.

RUBBERS are reported hard. The jobbers think that there are bears about. I am not so certain on this point. It is not a market in which to speculate for the moment, for there is no business, and prices are quite high enough, if judged from the standpoint of the investor. I again say that no one should buy rubber shares unless he can see a clear ten per cent. on his money. This is not a rule that can be applied wholesale. There are only about twenty shares in the rubber market that can be bought by the careful man. The rest are veritable gambles. Never touch anything outside the Federated Malay States.

OIL shares are such a limited market that, though we are promised a boom, I prefer to wait until the public come in

and buy. Mr. Mitchell has come home from California, and his report upon Kern is now issued. The Company is over-capitalised, but Mr. Mitchell is a careful man and he takes a moderately sanguine view. He thinks that the output can be increased, and that the price at which the Company has sold its oil, though not as high as that foreshadowed in the prospectus, is nevertheless profitable.

**KAFFIRS.**—The jobbers bid up City Deeps on the news of the crushing, and those who bought some time back thought it wise to take a profit. City Deep is a good mine, and at under 4 is a reasonable purchase. But the Kaffir market is so dull that prices may fall away in mere despair.

**RHODESIANS.**—All are awaiting the Chartered report. A solemn compact has been entered into by the big Rhodesian houses, who have promised not to sell shares, but to support each other. How far they will keep together remains to be seen. Some big options have been bought in Chartered, but otherwise the market is rotten.

**ELECTRICS.**—Wise people have been buying. The bears declared that the metallic filament lamp would reduce profits. It has not had the bad effect that some people expected. Profits are as good as last year; in some cases they are better. Nearly all the shares have risen. I think that we shall see at least a couple of points advance in all Electric Lighting shares within the next few months. They are one of the soundest investments in the House.

RAYMOND RADCLIFFE.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### THEOSOPHY

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—In your issue of January 14th appears an account of a lecture on Theosophy delivered by the Rev. J. J. B. Coles, M.A., F.R.G.S., in which the subject was treated in a manner that does not recommend itself to the close student of the teachings classed under that heading. The lecturer briefly outlined the salient points of belief in a fairly impartial manner, but proceeded later to speak of "profane and ludicrous theosophical teaching." How can such hasty judgments come from persons of reasoned and balanced minds? And as a matter of fact it is Theosophists and not as a rule "professing Christians" who really more nearly approach a right understanding of the "fuller and deeper teaching" of the writings of St. Paul. St. Paul was an Initiate of the one great school of mystics to which certain members of the Theosophical Society belong, and he spoke from full knowledge, as they do also when they place before the modern world teachings of ancient days that are as real and potent now as in an age less sceptical, less intolerant in its ignorances.

Another speaker thought that Theosophy should be classed with things "unclean and insane." Why unclean? Why insane? To disagree with a body of teaching does not necessarily imply anything radically wrong with the doctrines, and it is not a reasoned conclusion that unwelcome ideas are insane even if here or there are found crazy exponents of them. And while it is highly probable that there are "muddle-headed mystics" discoverable in the ranks of the Theosophical Society, seeing it is an organisation of human proportions and limitations, yet that in no wise detracts from the possibility of the soundness of its basis of thought. As Mrs. Sharpe pointed out, it is a system which has engaged some of the finest intellects of many ages, including within its ranks the greatest philosophers of all times, whether they in any particular personality might have recognised themselves or not under the modern name. Pythagoras was a Theosophist, and so was Lao-Tsze, and so were Plato and Euclid; they held high places in the hierarchy of aspirants after the Greater Wisdom. For, as the lecturer at the Victoria Institute explained, Theosophy is the name given to the present-day exposition of Universal Wisdom, the wisdom embracing every atom in its all-comprehending knowledge, and neither the unclean, nor the insane, nor the muddle-headed are likely to make much headway in mastering its ethics.—Yours &c.,

E. P. F.

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